

Iran calls to create environmental force

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran called Sunday on Iraq and the six Gulf Arab monarchies to join it in setting up a joint force to protect the environment in the Gulf. "The eight countries of the region will cooperate to avoid pollution and may deploy a maritime guard in their territorial and in international waters," Iran's Vice President Hashi Manafi said. Mr. Manafi, quoted by the official news agency IRNA, was referring to Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The vice president said oil tankers and foreign warships, especially U.S. vessels, were responsible for much Gulf pollution along with toxic waste discharged from factories in the region. Iranian military and political officials have increasingly talked of a security pact in the Gulf, amid warming ties between the Islamic Republic and its Gulf Arab neighbours.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية. الراي

2 Italian tourists seized by Yemeni tribesmen

SANAA (R) — Yemeni tribesmen have kidnapped two Italian tourists near the capital Sanaa, the latest in a string of kidnappings in the poor Arab state, a security source said Sunday. The man and the woman were kidnapped together with their Yemeni driver and a tour guide, who is also believed to be Yemeni. Saturday in Kholan, about 50 kilometres east of Sanaa, the source told Reuters. The source gave no further details, and it was not clear if the hostage-takers had made any demands. The Italian embassy in Sanaa said negotiations were under way, but declined to give any details. "We hope that things will be solved," an embassy official said.

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Israel apologises to Jordan over harassment

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel apologised to Jordan for harassing a Jordanian consular employee who was detained for five hours during a military road block around the West Bank, the foreign ministry announced Sunday. Jordan made an official protest about the incident, which took place over Wednesday night. Israeli public television reported that soldiers insulted the employee during a five-hour detention even though he had diplomatic immunity and was driving a car with diplomatic plates. "It is a regrettable incident, which is explained by the fact that the soldiers posted at a blockade too often ignore the instructions relating to diplomats," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Aviv Shiron. "The affair was settled when the commander became aware of the situation," he added.

Sudan renews call for Arab summit

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan has renewed its call for an Arab summit to discuss the crisis in the Middle East peace process, press reports said Sunday. Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail reiterated his government's support for calls by Libya, Iraq and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) for a summit, the Al Anbaa daily said. "We have notified the Egyptian government of our consent to convening the Arab summit which was originally proposed to be held on July 16," Mr. Ismail said, quoted by the paper. He also criticised Israel over its continued insistence on maintaining control of the Golan Heights. Sudanese President Omar Bashir Tuesday voiced his support for a call by Iraq for a summit. The Palestinian National Authority also called earlier this month for a summit, as did Libya.

Algerian rebels kill 13 in latest massacre — press

PARIS (R) — Suspected Islamist rebels killed 13 people in a hamlet in Algeria, the latest in a series of massacres in the past week in which scores have died by having their throats cut, an Algerian newspaper said Sunday. Al Khabar said Muslim guerrillas raided Sidi Salem village in Medea province, 70 kilometres south of Algiers, Friday night and killed 13 people, including three women. Another 13 people were wounded, seven of whom were in a serious condition.

Suspected terrorist dies in bomb explosion in Turkey

BODRUM (AP) — A suspected terrorist was killed Sunday in this Aegean resort when a bomb she was trying to plant in a public restroom exploded prematurely, authorities said. The bomb, placed near a shopping mall, exploded shortly after midnight, regional Gov. Ugur Boran said. Bodrum, some 1,100 kilometres southwest of the capital, Ankara, attracts thousands of Turkish and foreign tourists each year, and many people were strolling through the mall when the bomb went off. None of them was injured.

Jordan clinches Pan-Arab Games soccer gold medal

Jordanians take to the streets in celebration of historical win

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JORDAN SUNDAY scored its biggest sporting achievement when the soccer team clinched Pan-Arab Games soccer gold medal by beating Syria 1-0 to win the gold medal at the 8th Pan-Arab Games which concluded in Beirut following the match.

Jiryes Tadros scored the game-winning goal in the 38th minute of the second half sealing the team's precious win and capping a successful Jordanian participation in the Games (see story on page 10).

Jordan's only previous gold medal in team sports at the Pan-Arab Games came when the men's basketball team clinched first place in the 1985 Games in Morocco.

His Majesty King Hussein Sunday congratulated the team on their impressive record and donated JD 10,000 to the team. In a telephone call with Jordan Television, King Hussein congratulated Jordanian



Bashar Srour (centre) of Syria fights to take the ball from Rafat Ali Jabbar (right) of Jordan during their match at the Pan-Arab Games in Beirut Sunday when Jordan beat Syria 1-0 in the match and won the gold medal (Reuters photo)

athletes for their achievements in the Beirut Games particularly those who earned gold, silver and bronze medals.

Referring to Jordan's bid

to host the 2001 Pan-Arab Games, His Majesty said: "We will do our utmost to provide the best opportunities to make the 9th Pan-Arab Games a success."

Delegation sources said that the King will receive the team following their

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U.S. Jewish magnate insists can build in Arab Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A U.S. Jewish real estate baron authorised to build a potentially explosive Jewish enclave in Arab east Jerusalem said Sunday attempts to block the plan were "racist."

Irving Moskowitz, a Miami-based businessman who bankrolls Jewish settlement in occupied areas, was granted Thursday a Jerusalem municipality permit to build some 70 Jewish homes in the 11,000-strong Arab neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was apparently taken by surprise by the go-ahead for the project — which drew sharp Palestinian and Arab condemnation — and said he was working to block the plan "at this time."

"The property was purchased by me personally," Mr. Moskowitz told Israeli's army radio in his first public comments since the Jerusalem municipality planted the latest land mine in the path of struggling Middle East peace efforts.

"This is not a political

issue. It's a simple issue of the right of a property owner to build on his property. To deny it because I am Jewish and Arabs are opposed to it is racism," Mr. Moskowitz said.

He declined comment when asked whether he would heed an appeal from Mr. Netanyahu to delay the plan.

"The entire subject of whether I should build or not is ludicrous because I have a right to build."

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Jordan, Palestine lash out at settlement plans

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian and Palestinian officials Sunday once again lashed out at plans by a Jewish American billionaire to build a settlement for Jews in Ras Al Amoud in occupied east Jerusalem.

Speaking to the press after a meeting with Minis-

ter of Foreign Affairs Faysal Tarawneh, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official Mahmoud Abbas said: "We are against any settlement activity whether in Jabal Abu Ghneim or in Ras Al Amoud."

"We consider any settlement activity as illegal and contrary to (U.N.) Security Council resolution 242. These settlements are illegitimate, and we will not accept and acknowledge them," Mr. Abbas said.

Dr. Tarawneh said the new Israeli settlement plan contradicts the Israeli-Palestinian agreement which calls for restraint on any step that would negatively affect the final status talks between the two sides.

Irving Moskowitz, an American businessman, got initial approval to build a new settlement in the Arab neighbourhood of Ras Al

(Continued on page 7)

Jewish extremists arrested before entering Al Aqsa Mosque to pray

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli police arrested on Sunday three Jewish extremists who wanted to pray at the Al Aqsa Mosque complex in Arab east Jerusalem, court officials said.

A Jerusalem court had granted Yehuda Elzion, head of the extreme right "Hal Yekayam" group, authorisation to pray on the compound as long as he came alone, did not wear a prayer shawl and "murmured" his prayer so as not to disturb Muslim worshippers.

Police, however, decided to ban Elzion and two of his supporters from praying in the compound "to prevent them from disturbing public order." The three men were stopped by police before entering the mosque complex and after they refused to leave were arrested, the officials said.

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Biological inspectors start job in Iraq after end of Butler visit

BAGHDAD (AP) — A U.N. biological weapons inspection team began checking monitoring equipment Sunday in what could be the first test of a supposed new spirit of co-operation by Iraq noted by the chief U.N. arms inspector.

The team, headed by German biological inspector Gabriele Kraatz-Wadsack, arrived Saturday and began work Sunday morning, according to Joe Lomas, director of the local U.N. arms monitoring operation.

"Their mission is going to be to inspect sites undergo-

ing monitoring by the resident Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre," he said.

The team is the first to arrive since the visit last week of the new chief weapons inspector, Australian Richard Butler. Mr. Butler said he found "a new spirit of cooperation, a new sense of determination" that could bring results in three or four weeks.

The comments were a marked change from those of his predecessor, Rolf Ekeus, who frequently

(Continued on page 7)

U.S., U.K. aim to 'kill more Iraqis,' charges Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq's commerce minister accused the United States and Britain Sunday of aiming "to kill more Iraqis" by holding up contracts for food and medical supplies.

The United Nations has "received sums for (war) reparations and U.N. inspection missions, while the food and medicine" under the oil-for-food deal is being delayed, said Mohammad Mehdi Saleh.

He renewed charges that the United States, with the support of Britain, was working within the U.N. Sanctions Committee to hold up Iraq's contracts for humanitarian imports under the deal which was launched in December.

The aim of the delay was "to kill more Iraqis."

Sanctions-hit Baghdad resumed limited oil exports

(Continued on page 7)



Belgian King Albert II (left) Sunday presents his condolences to the members of the Jordanian Royal Falcons patrol after he left the mortuary chapel of the Ostende Serruys Hospital. A plane from the Jordan Royal Falcons crashed Saturday into the public, killing eight and injuring 55 during the Ostende Air Show (AFP photo)

One injured in Belgian show remains in danger

OSTENDE (R) — Eight people died and one was fighting for his life after a light plane mounting an aerobatics display crashed onto a Red Cross tent at an air show in the Belgian coastal town of Ostende.

"The figure of eight is temporary...we hope it stays that way...We are not very sure," Interior Minister Johan Vande Lanotte told Reuters.

The pilot, Captain Omar Hani Bilal of Jordan's Royal Falcons aerobatics display team, was among those who died in the crash which took place late on Saturday afternoon.

A Frenchman and his 22-month-old daughter and five Belgian men, most in their late twenties and early thirties also died. Joan Dewinne, head of the special disaster victim identification unit, told a news conference at Ostende airport on Sunday.

Ms. Dewinne said they all died on impact. "Their death was immediate, that is clear." Burning fuel from the plane then heavily charred their bodies, hampering identification.

The Jordanian Air Force aerobatics plane spun out of control during a solo display and crashed, raining debris on the crowd and spraying people with burning kerosene.

Thirty of the 57 injured have been able to return home, Vande Lanotte said. Of three people thought to be critically ill, the health of two stabilised on Sunday.

The minister, who rushed to the scene, said the pilot appeared to have lost control of his plane.

"The plane at a certain moment flew directly over



File photo taken June 11, 1997 during an air show near the German city of Finow shows the late Jordanian air force pilot Omar Hani Bilal (AFP photo)

King expresses grief over death of Capt. Omar Bilal

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday expressed deep grief over the death of Captain Omar Hani Bilal, member of the Jordanian Royal Falcons team whose plane crashed Saturday during a stunt manoeuvre at a Belgian air show near Ostende.

The late Capt. Bilal had presented unique performances in various international airshows around the world and won high esteem for his skills. He had won the Bertling cup for his performances in

1995 and 1996. The late Capt. Bilal who had been decorated with Al Hussein Silver Medal had also taken part in Air Tattoo airshows in Britain and France and was this year scheduled to take part in air shows to be held in Turkey and Italy.

In expressing his sorrow over the death of Capt. Bilal, King Hussein conveyed his condolences to Capt. Bilal's bereaved family, his colleagues in the Jordanian Royal Falcons and the Royal Jordanian Air Force.

the crowd, which is not allowed," he said. Possible causes were ill health, human error or a technical problem.

Air show rules dictate,

(Continued on page 7)

Syria writes off hope for peace under Netanyahu

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria said Sunday there will be no progress in the Middle East peace process so long as it has to abide by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains in power.

"Any progress in the peace process is impossible with Netanyahu's government, which refuses to abide by U.N. resolutions and wants to return (Israeli-Syrian) negotiations to the starting point," the official daily Al Thawra wrote.

The newspaper condemned a bill approved by the Israeli parliament aimed at blocking any Israeli withdrawal from the Golan

Heights as well as plans to build Jewish settlements in occupied Arab east Jerusalem.

It said Mr. Netanyahu "is slamming all doors shut on peace and sabotages any attempt to resume negotiations" between Israel and the Arabs.

"The policy of Mr. Netanyahu's government flies in the face of appeals from the international community and could lead the region straight into war," Al Thawra added.

The Israeli Knesset approved a bill last week stipulating a two-thirds majority in parliament before any Israeli withdrawal

al from the Golan, which the Jewish state captured from Syria in 1967.

Syria says Israel's former Labour government pledged to hand back the Golan before peace talks were broken off in February 1996, and insists negotiations resume at the same point.

Mr. Netanyahu has refused, calling on Syria to return to the negotiating table without any preconditions.

Israel's peace talks with the Palestinians have also been frozen since mid-March when Israel began work on a 6,500-home settlement in occupied Arab east Jerusalem.

Kuwaiti MPs attempt more control over oil drilling rights

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's parliament moved to curb the government's executive powers for fear it might sign domestic oil production and exploration deals with foreign firms, a leading MP said Sunday.

"The aim of the request is to make the government not even use its executive powers before consulting parliament first," Islamist MP Nasser Sanea, head of parliament's finance committee, told Reuters.

Parliament late Saturday approved a recommendation, co-presented by Mr. Sanea, requesting the government to present parliament with any proposed deals for joint oil exploration and production with foreign firms.

But the three requests relating to the oil industry which were passed are largely "political and not constitutional obligations" as they were not made law, a political source said.

Political sources said MPs were concerned the country's supreme Petroleum

Council was planning to discuss soon the possibility of upgrading existing fee-for-services technical assistance accords with global oil majors to a formula which could include production sharing.

The MPs were also concerned the government would move to renew a concession deal with Japan's Arabian Oil Co Ltd (AOC) for offshore operations within the border neutral zone which Kuwait shares with Saudi Arabia.

"We are not against AOC but we want to see the new deal first," said Mr. Sanea. Kuwait has hinted that it was inclined to renew the concession accord which expires the year 2003.

AOC plans to raise output by some 50,000 bpd to 350,000 bpd by 2000. Japanese interests hold the majority of AOC's stock while Kuwait and Riyadh each hold a 10 per cent stake.

AOC's accord with Riyadh expires the year 2000. Mr. Sanea said he quickly drafted the request after Oil

Minister Isa Mazzeedi "did not assure me."

"I said even if it is within your domain I want assurances from the government. We wanted to hear it, we wanted the government to say it bluntly," he said.

Some MPs argue that they have the constitutional right to approve any accords dealing with natural resources. Kuwait, which has an OPEC quota of two million barrels per day, controls about 10 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves.

Industry experts say giants like British Petroleum PLC and Chevron Total SA were keen to sign technical deals to be involved in the Gulf state's oil industry for hope they would eventually have joint exploration and production accords.

"But this is a matter of national sovereignty. We do not want them to take over parts of strategic (oil) operations," said Mr. Sanea. "Parliament has to be consulted first. Now there is political obligation..."

Kuwait is working to raise

production capacity by about one million bpd to 3.5 million bpd early in the next century.

Kuwait, which gained independence from Britain in 1961, nationalised the oil industry in the 1970s, forming in 1980 the Kuwait Petroleum Corp. (KPC) which has grown to become one of the world's 10 largest oil firms.

Another request passed by parliament called on KPC to coordinate investment policies with state Kuwait investment authority which runs a foreign portfolio of over \$40 billion.

A third request asked KPC and its subsidiaries to notify parliament prior to concluding new deals or projects.

KPC, which runs Kuwait's oil industry, owns firms which produce, refine, ship and market oil and petrochemicals and explore for oil and gas in Kuwait and abroad.



ANOTHER TUNNEL UP IN SMOKE: Israeli soldiers Sunday dynamited a tunnel dug by Palestinians from the Gaza Strip into Egypt and used for smuggling, military sources said. The army has already blown up five other tunnels between the Strip and Egypt in recent months, claiming they are used to sneak weapons, drugs and goods into the PNA-ruled area. Sunday's tunnel was near Rafah, the only crossing point between the Gaza Strip and Egypt (AFP photo)

Posters of Saddam, Assad hang side-by-side at Iraq exhibition

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Posters of bitter rivals Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Syrian counterpart Hafez Al Assad hung side-by-side at the opening of a trade fair here Sunday of pharmaceutical goods from Syria.

In a further sign of an easing in relations between the two Arab neighbours which severed ties in 1980, the Syrian flag fluttered over the Baghdad International Fair.

Health Minister Umid Medhat Mubarak and Commerce Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh took part in an opening ceremony for the three-day exhibition, in which 38 Syrian firms are vying for Iraqi contracts.

Mr. Saleh said his sanctions-hit coun-

try is in the market for much higher contracts than the \$20 million worth signed with Syria toward the end of the first six months of the U.N. oil-for-food deal.

Under the accord, Iraq started exporting crude in December to finance imports of food and medicine. It was renewed for another six months in June.

Another Syrian trade delegation is due in Baghdad at the start of August to discuss food contracts, following a ground-breaking visit by Syrian businessmen in May, Mr. Saleh said.

Relations between Syria and Iraq, which are ruled by rival wings of the Baath Party, have warmed over the last three months and their border has reopened to businessmen after a closure

of 15 years. Iraq, which has been under sanctions imposed after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990, has asked for U.N. approval to import goods through the Syrian border under the oil-for-food accord.

A delegation of Iraqi industrial leaders is due in Damascus soon to examine ways to boost trade.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Sahhaf has backed a normalisation of relations with Syria. "We want to turn a new page with Syria, to fully re-establish ties and reopen embassies," he said. But Syria has said it is too early for a political normalisation.

Mubarak sons pursue libel action against Saudi press group

CAIRO (AFP) — A libel trial brought by the two sons of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak against a Saudi newspaper group is to continue in September after they refused to drop their case, a court said Sunday.

The Ashraq Al Awsat group apologised to Alaa and Gamal Mubarak about an article implicating them in shady business dealings when the trial first opened a week ago at a Cairo court.

But the pair said they would pursue their libel action against two editors and four journalists from the group. The court adjourned Sunday until September 7.

The Mubarak's lawyer, Ragai Attaya, said the newspaper group committed a "crime as part of an evil plan to destroy their reputation."

The London-based Ashraq Al Awsat daily carried an advertisement in May for an article to appear in a sister paper Al Jadida implicating the Mubarak in corruption.

Distribution of Al Jadida was blocked and very few copies were sold, although Attaya produced 15 copies during Sunday's hearing.

Date of Rafsanjani's visit to Saudi Arabia not clear — Iranian official

DUBAI (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will visit Saudi Arabia later this year in a further sign of closer ties between the region's two heavyweights, an Iranian embassy official in Riyadh said Sunday.

But the Islamic Republic's veteran foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, cast doubt on prospects for a visit.

The official at Iran's Saudi mission said Mr. Rafsanjani, who steps down as president next month after serving the maximum two four-year terms permitted by law, was scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia later this year.

"The visit will happen but the date is not clear now," the official said.

But Mr. Velayati said: "I think Mr. Rafsanjani's visit to Saudi Arabia is unlikely."

"If such a visit were due, the procedures should have been prepared by the for-

eign ministry," he told the daily Kayhan in an interview.

Saudi-owned Ashraq Al Awsat newspaper on Sunday reported that Mr. Rafsanjani's visit would take place in November.

Shiite Iran, the Gulf's non-Arab power, has had tense relations with Sunni Saudi Arabia since Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution and diplomatic relations were severed in 1987 after rioting during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

Saudi Arabia remains the main ally of the United States in the oil-rich Gulf while Washington has sought to isolate the Islamic Republic, charging it with sponsoring international terrorism, threatening the Middle East peace process and developing weapons of mass destruction.

Iran has repeatedly denied these allegations, which it says are used by Washington to justify sales of U.S.

Military equipment to Gulf Arab states.

Senior Gulf sources have said that the growing role of Saudi King Fahd's designated heir, Crown Prince Abdullah, in foreign affairs had led to Riyadh's move to edge closer to Tehran.

Both men met on the sidelines of an Islamic summit in Pakistan in March and this had led to an invitation for Mr. Rafsanjani to visit Saudi Arabia.

An envoy of King Fahd made a rare visit to Iran this month ahead of a summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference due in Tehran in December.

Mr. Rafsanjani will be succeeded by president-elect Mohammad Khatami in August but is expected to retain a strong political and diplomatic role after the handover of power.

Saudi Arabia and Iran are two of the world's top three oil exporters.

Gulf seeks smoking ban on public transport, flights

DUBAI (R) — The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) said it was seeking to ban smoking on all public transport and domestic flights in the six-member alliance, the daily Saudi Gazette newspaper said Sunday.

The GCC's general secretariat has also said it planned to ban cigarette and tobacco advertising in all media in member states Saudi Arabia,

the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar.

Advertising executives in the Gulf have said the proposed media ban would strike a powerful blow to the region's young advertising sector and local economies.

The Gulf is considered a major cigarette market, with annual imports in Saudi Arabia alone estimated at \$800

million.

The steps are part of the GCC's efforts to curb smoking. Gulf Arab states have already agreed to a gradual rise in cigarette duties to 100 per cent by 2000.

Some Gulf states have banned the import of cigarettes with more than 0.6 mg of nicotine and 10 mg of tar.

Jewish settlers have found a rich backer in Moskowitz

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — U.S. millionaire Irving Moskowitz's attempt to build a potentially explosive new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem is only his latest project aimed at crowding out any Palestinian claim to the Holy City.

Since the 1970s, Moskowitz, a wealthy Jewish property developer from Miami, has become a primary financial backer of right-wing Jewish religious groups trying to "Judaize" Arab east Jerusalem through the purchase of private property and construction.

Mr. Moskowitz, 70, financed the opening of an archaeological tunnel near Muslim holy sites in Arab east Jerusalem last September, which sparked three days of violence in the Palestinian territories that left more than 80 dead.

He was one of the few guests invited to the night-time inauguration of the controversial tunnel, according to Israeli

press reports.

His latest project, the construction of 70 new homes for Jews on land he owns at the foot of the Mount of Olives, would be the first time Israel has built a settlement in the heart of a Palestinian district.

He put the project on hold Saturday because of strong opposition from the Israeli government and following Palestinian warnings that it represented "a declaration of war," sources close to him said.

But the U.S. developer held out the option to begin construction in Ras Al Amoud, a neighbourhood of 11,000 Palestinians, at a more opportune time.

"The subject of whether I should build or not is ludicrous because I have the right to build," Mr. Moskowitz told Israeli army radio Sunday.

"It's a democratic country, and in any country of the world where there is democracy, the owner of a piece of land

is allowed to build on that land."

Mr. Moskowitz, a discreet neurological surgeon who wears a kippa and is the father of eight children, has repeatedly backed his words with money.

He bankrolls right-wing nationalist and religious groups such as Ateret Cohanim, whose goal is to buy up property in east Jerusalem annexed by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

The group has purchased land in Abu Dis, a Palestinian suburb of Jerusalem on the West Bank, and on the Mount of Olives, in the Arab sector of the Holy City, where it founded a Jewish religious seminary.

Mr. Moskowitz has also financed the activities of Elad, a ultra-nationalist association which backed the construction of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian quarter of Silwan, next to Jerusalem's Old City.

In addition, Mr. Moskowitz purchased a hotel in the city district of Sheikh Jarrah in Arab east Jerusalem.

"We will build in Jerusalem, the capital of the Jews, because we have received all the necessary permits," Mr. Moskowitz said in an interview published in the Maariv newspaper Sunday.

Over the years, the developer has expanded his activities with the purchase of land near the Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom in the Palestinian-ruled Gaza Strip, and partly financed the construction of an open-air theatre on the Golan Heights, which Israeli captured from Syria in 1967. According to Maariv, Mr. Moskowitz has tried to conduct his activities in the shadows using banks and front companies based in foreign countries (see story on page 1).

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:40 Spiro
16:05 Neighbours
16:30 Deep Water Haven
17:00 Ocean Girl
17:15 Nature by Profession
18:10 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Neighbours
20:00 The Giant Nile
20:30 Babylon 5
21:10 Highlander
22:00 News in English
22:35 Law and Order
23:15 Homicide

PRAYER TIMES

04:14 Fajr
05:43 (Sunrise) Doha
12:42 Dhuhur
16:23 'Asr
19:41 Maghreb
21:11 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweidieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622666

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Normal summer weather conditions will prevail with temperatures dropping gradually becoming around average and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.

Amman 20/32

Aqaba 27/40

Deserts 18/36

Jordan Valley 25/39

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 35, Aqaba 42 Humidity

readings: Amman 25 per cent,

Aqaba 21 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bassam Karadshah 759200

Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi 894788

Dr. Khalid M'addi 661144

Dr. Salman Daboubi 778751

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Nairouh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Samir Al Lawzi 898601

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Highway Police 845402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Dept. 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

J. Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Co. 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 644281/6

Akileh Maternity 642411/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and

Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

..... (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital

..... (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Beirut (RJ)

15:25 Kuwait (RJ)

17:15 Cairo (RJ)

17:30 London (RJ)

17:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

Greek Catholic Hospital

..... (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital

..... (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital

..... (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT



HRH Princess Rania Al Abdullah, president of the Jordan River Society, Sunday signs an agreement with Fakhri Restaurant. The agreement stipulates the display of the society's handicrafts at the restaurant (Petra photo)

'Jordan to promote economic and trade ties with Palestine'

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki Sunday affirmed Jordan's determination to promote trade and economic ties with the Palestinian self-rule areas. He described such ties as part of the Kingdom's continued pan-Arab endeavours to solidify its national position for the 21st century. During the opening session of a Jordanian-Palestinian technical committee, meeting here to discuss means of facilitating trade and economic cooperation between Palestine and Jordan, Dr. Mulki affirmed that the two sides are determined to take practical steps towards removing trade barriers. The committee meeting was convened as the result of talks between Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Ramallah last week. "In our talks this week, we are attempting to contain obstacles and discover ways to achieve our aspired goals," Dr. Mulki stated. "We are certain to find a mechanism for organising

Palestinian-Jordanian trade and economic relations," he added. "And, thus, will we be empowered to increase the flow of goods between the two [peoples]." Khaled Salameh, an advisor to Mr. Arafat, emphasised the importance of resolving trade and economic issues between Jordan and Palestine as between Palestine and Israel. Referring to a trade agreement reached two years ago between the Palestinians and the Israelis, Mr. Salameh maintained that during the Paris negotiations, the Palestinians had given priority to political issues and were thus compelled to accept a trade protocol, proposed by the Israelis, in order to assure the success of political negotiations. "As a result, Israel has ensured their own domination of Palestinian markets which they are reluctant to lose as all kinds of Israeli-made goods are sold there," Mr. Salameh explained. Israel currently sells \$2.4 billion worth of goods annually to Palestinian

markets, he said, and only five per cent of Palestinian imports come from foreign markets due to Israeli restrictions. "Israel is making every excuse to keep Palestinian markets under its control," he added. "These are the second largest for Israeli goods." "We must take practical steps and pressure the Israelis to ensure that their goods conform to Palestinian specifications and standards and are subjected to customs tax," Mr. Salameh concluded. The committee, whose meetings are expected to last for one week, groups senior officials from the ministries of industry, trade, agriculture, transport and customs on both sides. Later on, deputy Prime Minister For Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani received at his office Mr. Salameh and called for further bilateral coordination and cooperation prior to the trilateral meeting which features Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians.

Chairman of the joint chiefs of staff endorses life sentence for Ahmad Dakamseh

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Jordan Armed Forces Marshal Abdul Hafez Marei Kaabneh endorsed a July 19 military court verdict sentencing Ahmad Dakamseh to life imprisonment for the manslaughter of seven Israeli schoolgirls last March. The students had been visiting the village of Baqoura. Military judicial sources affirmed that with Saturday's ratification, the verdict can no longer be appealed nor contested in any court as stipulated by law. Mr. Dakamseh, who has been dishonourably

discharged from the armed forces, now holds civilian status and is no longer connected to the armed forces. He will serve his life sentence with hard labour in a civilian prison. The military court, comprised of five judges, declared the 26-year old man guilty of manslaughter. According to the sources, Marshal Kaabneh endorsed the verdict in accordance with the authority vested in him in Article Eight of the Military Penal Code of 1952 which grants him full authority to endorse or reject a military court

sentence. His other options were to have referred the trial to another military court, commuted the sentence or cancelled the verdict and called for a retrial. Subsequent to the court's verdict issuance, a special military council studied the ruling and passed its recommendation to the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, according to the sources. The military court's verdict cannot be repealed in any court, however. His Majesty King Hussein, in his capacity as supreme commander of the Jordan Armed Forces, is the only person authorised to commute the sentence.

Police arrest suspected university gunman

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — University of Jordan officials Sunday affirmed that police have arrested a 21-year old student who Saturday morning allegedly opened fire at a group of students, injuring five. They stated that the student has been summarily expelled from the university. The alleged gunman, identified only as Suleiman U., reportedly fired several shots inside the university's Humanities Building, exited the facility and then randomly shot at students near the Faculty of Economics and Commerce before fleeing.

Scores of students who were in the building rushed out and some reportedly fainted in panic after the gun shots were fired. "Police arrested the student late Saturday night, and he is being detained for questioning at Sweileh Police Station," Dean of Student Affairs Salman Bdour told the Jordan Times Sunday. Dr. Bdour confirmed the university administration's decision Sunday to expel the student, an art major, who was slated to graduate from the university in one semester. According to the dean, the student in question Wednesday argued with a group of students "but they settled their feuds the same evening before leaving the campus."

"On Saturday the same students met and argued," he added. "[The encounter] devolved into a fist fight and gun shots were fired at several students. He added that an investigative committee is questioning other students involved in the fist fight. The five students who were injured in the incident were treated and released from Jordan University Hospital the same day. According to Dr. Bdour, campus security has been tightened and "we are taking steps to monitor all students who enter the campus." Generally students entering the campus are asked only to show cards of student identification.

Deputy governor commits apparent suicide

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The criminal prosecutor Sunday began investigating the death of Deputy Governor Mazen Oran, 49, who was found dead in his bedroom Saturday.

Initial reports indicated that Mr. Oran took his own life, and officials have stated that police are investigating any possible motives he may have had for doing so. Head of the National Institute for Forensic Medicine Mo'men Hadidi examined the body and stated that Mr. Oran died of a sole gunshot wound to the head.

"Mr. Oran's wound conforms to that of a self-inflicted shooting," Dr. Hadidi told the Jordan Times Sunday. An official source stated that Mr. Oran "may have decided to take his own life as he suffered from social problems." Meanwhile, three Iraqis were killed and one was listed in critical condition Sunday subsequent to a road collision near the Jordanian-Iraqi border, according to police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials.

The accident, occurring at approximately 2:30 p.m., eight kilometres from the border area of Rweished, involved a trailer travelling to Iraq and a automobile arriving from the opposite direction.

A police official told the Jordan Times that the automobile swerved away from its lane and met with the trailer head-on.

The impact caused the immediate death of three of the four passengers in the automobile, he added.

The deceased were identified as: Abdullah Yousef Salem, 67, Mhawhi Faza, 37, and Khalid Amer, 44, the automobile driver.

The fourth passenger, Haidar Mhawhi, 28, survived the accident, but has been listed in critical condition.

The driver of the trailer, Ridah Kathem, 35, was reported unharmed.

In other incidents in the Kingdom, a six-year old child was accidentally shot and killed by her older brother in their house in Shuneh, according to police reports.

The brother of Balqis Mohammad was apparently playing with a hunting rifle when a bullet was accidentally shot and struck his sister killing her instantly, the report said.

Balqis became the third person, and the second child, killed in accidental shooting incidents in the Kingdom over the past two days.

Police Saturday described two deaths and 13 other shooting incidents, which left 13 people injured, as stemming from students celebrating twajji exams, other festive fire, and stray bullets.

10,300 students to be accepted in state universities

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Approximately 10,300 students will be accepted in state universities for the 1997-98 academic year, an increase of 350 students over those who enrolled during the previous year, according to Head of the Coordination Committee for Admission at State Universities Waleed Ma'ani. This increase was made possible by the lowering of requirements deemed mandatory for admission, he explained. In a press conference at the University of Jordan, Dr. Ma'ani confirmed that student scores this year were on the average 1-1.5 points lower than last year's average results. He advised students to complete their university application forms, to be received by Aug. 3, and

state 20 alternative fields and places of study to guarantee acceptance in a state university. "Students vary in their preferences, some give priority to place, others to the field of study, and some simply want a university seat," Dr. Ma'ani explained. When the number of students desiring to declare one major increases, scores necessary for acceptance in that field consequently rises, he explained. Last year, 393 students scored an average greater than the 95th percentile and 2,036 students scored with averages over the 90th percentile, Dr. Ma'ani explained. Therefore, the average score deemed necessary for acceptance was higher at that time, he added. "Jordanian students, currently residing in foreign countries, compete among

themselves and are accepted depending on their average grades," Dr. Ma'ani stated. "The only exception is for those students applying from Saudi Arabia from whom we must eliminate two grades from the total average, as these do not conform to the Kingdom's system," he stated. "Those categories are good conduct and sport." Admission results will be delayed this year, as tawjihi results were also late by six days, Dr. Ma'ani stated. We will be expecting acceptance results by the last week of August. Jordanians living abroad are to submit their applications to their respective embassies abroad, he added. A total of 966 foreign students are expected to apply this year with similar application forms, according to Dr. Ma'ani.

An additional 1,318 students from less fortunate areas, currently under the supervision of a committee at the Royal Court, headed by HRH Prince Ghazi, will be granted seats in state universities, he explained. A total of 20 per cent of all accepted students will be taken from a list of students recommended by the Jordan Armed Forces and five per cent will be recommended by the Ministry of Education, Dr. Ma'ani stated. The acceptance procedures will follow guidelines set by the Council of Higher Education (CHE), he affirmed. A social sciences and humanities faculty has been established at the University of Jordan and the faculties of economy and administrative sciences have been restructured there, Dr. Ma'ani concluded.

Seminar to focus on city of Salt

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, a seminar entitled "Salt: Reality and Ambition" will be held Tuesday at Salt Community College. The seminar has been organised by Al Urdun Al Jadid Centre and the Salt Municipality as well as the

Salt Reconstruction Foundation. The conference is slated to focus on five areas: • The history of Salt and its relations with other major cities in the region; • Architecture unique to the area; • Salt as a tourist site with both ancient places

and scenic views of interest; • Services offered to residents of the area, particularly in the fields of education, health, culture, environment and infrastructure services; and finally • Social and voluntary societies and their role in Salt.

Ministry will not extend deadline for Egyptian labourers to rectify irregularities in documentation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Labour is not planning to extend the Aug. 9 deadline by which time Egyptian workers illegally labouring in Jordan must correct their situations, according to Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh. In a statement to Al Aswaq Arabic daily, Dr. Khasawneh affirmed that his ministry will implement all provisions of laws and regulations governing the Jordanian labour force as of Aug. 10. The ministry's measures are aimed at organising the labour force in Jordan and easing unemployment in the country, he added. Ministry sources estimated that out of 230,000 Egyptians,

working in Jordan, 95,000 have heretofore corrected any irregularities in their documentation. However, Egyptian Minister of Labour and Immigration Ahmad Amawi differed, stating that 125,000 Egyptian workers in Jordan have rectified their situations in accordance with a cooperation agreement on exchange of labourers, concluded between Jordan and Egypt. In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the Egyptian minister stated that some Egyptian workers enter Jordan from neighbouring countries, and called on Egyptian workers who have not organised their documents to do so before the Aug. 9, deadline.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

Concert by the Amar Cord String Quartet of Poland at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
Concert by Asi Al Hilam of Lebanon at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
Concert by Thula Sizwe of South Africa at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
Shakespeare's play "Much Ado About Nothing" by the American Biggest Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
Children's play "The Trial of the Fox" at Gasha Theatre at 8:00 p.m.
Display of handicrafts and sculptures at Zeus vault.
Musical performance by The Family International Schleswig-Holstein and Jordanian bands at the main square at 7:00 p.m.
Poetry recitals by Moroccan, Egyptian and Jordanian poets at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:45 p.m.

FILM

"Le Miserable" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh at 8:30 p.m.

CONCERT

Musical performance by Harvard University band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURES

"The Relationship Between Astrology and Astronomy" by Mr. Inad Mojahed (in Arabic) at the Friends of Archaeology Center at 6:30 p.m. (Tel. 696682).
"Fall Haban Cultural History Project and Survey" by Gary Christopherson at the American Center of Oriental Research (Tel. 846-117) at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

Paintings and ceramics sculptures by Arab artists at the Orient Gallery, Shmeisani (Tel. 681303) until July 31.
Display of Bani Hamida hand-made products at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, until July 31 (Tel. 658696/7).
Photo exhibition entitled "Jerusalem in Danger" by Khalid Al Zaghari at the Modern Educational School, Khalda, until July 31.
Photography exhibition by Jan Kassay, at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until July 29.
Paintings by Ali Al Ghoul at Greater Amman Municipality Cultural Department, Ras Al Ain, until July 31.

Kashmir leaders hail Indian prime minister's offer to talk to militants

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Many Kashmir leaders Sunday hailed the offer of talks to Muslim separatists by Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral.

"It is a healthy sign," said Shabir Ahmad Shah, one of the most influential Muslim leaders in Kashmir, where a bloody separatist drive since 1989 has left around 20,000 people dead.

"Better late than never," Mr. Shah told AFP. "India has finally agreed to talk without any precondition."

Mr. Shah, dubbed the Nelson Mandela of Kashmir, said his People's Party would discuss the proposal after "knowing the full stand of the Indian government" and then produce a detailed statement.

Abdul Gani Lone, another prominent Muslim separatist leader, declined to comment until his col-

leagues were released from jail. "Only then we will put our heads together and come out with our reaction."

Prime Minister Gujral offered during a visit to Kashmir Saturday to hold unconditional talks with Muslim separatists in Kashmir, the only Muslim-majority state in Hindu-dominated India.

It was the first offer of its kind by the Indian government to Kashmiri militants. "I am willing to talk to the separatist militants unconditionally to pave the way for lasting peace in Kashmir," Mr. Gujral said.

His statement also received support from the Congress (I) Party, which props up his United Front Coalition government in New Delhi but is the main opposition in Kashmir.

The Congress has been

pleading that to bring normalcy, a dialogue should be held with militant youth," said party leader Mehmooba Mufti.

"Gun cannot be a solution (to the Kashmir problem)," Mohammad Shafi Uri, a member of Kashmir's pro-India ruling National Conference Party and a minister in the state government, added: "It is a step in the right direction."

"It is now for militant leaders and their supporters to react positively. The ball is in their court."

There was no immediate reaction from other mainstream Indian political parties in New Delhi. Hindu nationalists, now holding a leadership conclave, were expected to comment later.

Muslim militants in Kashmir have in the past rejected offers of talks with New Delhi, saying they would

never give up their armed struggle for the independence of the Himalayan state.

In 1996, a group of nine disgruntled militants opened negotiations with the Indian government. But nothing came of the talks although some two dozen militants fought last year's elections to the Kashmir legislature.

Scores of Muslim militants have in recent years given up weapons and surrendered to the authorities. Indian officials say most of the fighting in Kashmir is now done by Muslim militants from Islamic countries.

India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir and have fought two wars over the province. India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Muslim militants in the state. Islamabad denies the charge.

Chechen leaders meet to hammer out stabilisation programme

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen leaders and representatives of various political parties convened Saturday in Grozny to develop a programme to stabilise the situation in the breakaway republic. IJAR-TASS news agency reported.

The forum leader, Chechen First Deputy Prime Minister Movladi Udugov, said the moment had come when all parties and factions "unite into a single block to resist, by joint efforts, attempts to split Chechen society."

The forum is expected to elect a body which will coordinate programmes and actions by all political forces in the republic, Mr. Udugov said.

Chechen fighters defeated Russian forces in a devastating 20-month war that ended last year. The republic considers itself independent though its status has not been formally acknowledged by Moscow.

Also Saturday, IJAR-TASS quoted a representative of Chechnya's military staff as saying the republic had begun forming its own professional army.

Umar Kambiyev said the new force would be "highly organised and equipped with all necessary weapons, capable of performing any task to protect the young Chechen state from external aggression."

Mr. Kambiyev said the size of the army was secret, but added that it would not be short of troops.

The number of volunteer guerrillas who stood up to them for more than two months, while two Britons, Jon James and Camilla Carr, working for an agency aiding children traumatised by war, were kidnapped in the capital at the beginning of this month.

Officials of the Russian and Chechen border services agreed Saturday that preparations will soon be made for international flights at Grozny's airport, Interfax News Agency reported.

The decision was reached during talks between the Russian Federal Border Service and the Chechen State Border and Customs Service held in Moscow over the weekend.

As a result, a checkpoint for flights to the capitals of member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States will be prepared at the Chechen capital's Sheikh Mansur Airport by Aug. 1, Interfax said.

The talks were the latest step in the implementation of a bilateral customs agreement between Russia and the republic which was signed on July 12.

The customs agreement and Chechnya's demand that the Sheikh Mansur Airport receive international status were major factors in the signing of a recent oil pipeline deal between Russia, Azerbaijan and Chechnya in early July.

are being held in an unknown location, three of them for more than two months, while two Britons, Jon James and Camilla Carr, working for an agency aiding children traumatised by war, were kidnapped in the capital at the beginning of this month.

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Five Russian journalists

Sri Lanka welcomes foreign condemnation of rebels

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka Sunday welcomed U.S. and Australian criticism of the island's separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas and urged other countries to join the international condemnation of the rebels.

The Foreign Ministry here said it was pleased by remarks of visiting Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and the U.S. State Department last week attacking the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"Democratic governments can face the threat posed by terrorism only if fellow democracies stand up to be counted," a Foreign Ministry spokesman here said.

"The Australian and U.S. reactions in the past week have been a clear indication of support and we hope others would act similarly."

The ministry Sunday issued a transcript of a statement made by State Department deputy spokesman James Foley Friday condemning the killing of two Sri Lankan legislators and attacks this month against merchant shipping.

"The U.S. strongly condemns the assassinations and the interference with shipping," Mr. Foley said. "We urge the LTTE to cease all acts of terrorism."

"We join Amnesty International in calling for the LTTE to stop immediately the killing of non-combatants and cease other human rights abuses," Mr. Foley was quoted as saying.

Amnesty said Wednesday it asked the LTTE to stop killing civilians following the assassination of a Muslim legislator, Mohammad Maharoof, in the island's north-eastern port district of Trincomalee.

It said there was mounting evidence suggesting that the LTTE was responsible for the killing of another Sri Lankan legislator, Arunachalam Thangathurai, also in Trincomalee on July 5.

There has been no immediate reaction from the LTTE to the latest Amnesty appeal and criticism by the U.S. and Australian governments.

Mr. Downer bluntly criticised the LTTE at a news conference here Thursday and said there was no "terrorist solution" to the Indian Ocean island's drawn out ethnic conflict.

"The Australian government unequivocally condemns the terrorist activities of the LTTE," Mr. Downer said. But he ruled out any military assistance to the Sri Lankan government to fight the rebels.

He said Canberra supported the Sri Lankan government's political efforts to end the drawn out conflict but did not believe that third party foreign mediation would further Colombo's ongoing political moves.



A family fights against strong wind and rain in Osaka while Typhoon Rosie hit western Japan. The typhoon headed out to sea after killing four people and injuring more than three dozen in its weekend hammering of southwestern Japan (Reuter photo)

Typhoon heads to sea after killing 4 in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Typhoon Rosie headed out to sea Sunday after killing four people and injuring more than three dozen in its weekend hammering of southwestern Japan.

The typhoon brought winds of up to 144 kph (90 mph) as it moved into the Sea of Japan away from southwestern regions of Japan's main island Honshu early Sunday.

The storm, described by

Japan's Meteorological Agency as a "medium-sized but powerful" typhoon, was slowly moving northwest over the Sea of Japan, the agency said.

The typhoon affected tens of thousands of travellers at the weekend and caused the cancellation of most sports events Saturday including Japan's professional J. League soccer all-star match.

In Yamaguchi prefecture in western Japan, two wo-

men drowned while picking shellfish in a river, police said.

Earlier Sunday, two crew members of a car ferry died in a hospital after the 8,015-tonne vessel was hit by high waves.

Police said the typhoon injured at least 39 people. Air, rail, road and ocean traffic returned to normal Sunday.

The typhoon forced the cancellation of nearly 500

domestic flights, affecting some 57,000 travellers Saturday.

As of noon (0300 GMT) Sunday, the typhoon was about 120 kilometres west of Shimane prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast, the agency said.

The typhoon was expected to weaken further, veer north and move between Japan and the Russian far east before becoming a tropical storm Tuesday, it added.

Cambodian royalist troops converge on Poipet

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodian troops loyal to ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh said Sunday they would soon move against government soldiers to take complete control of the northwestern town of Poipet on the Thai border.

Some of a group of 700 12th Army soldiers under Major General Lay Virak, speaking to reporters at a border crossing between Aranyaprathet, Thailand and Poipet said the town, about 410 kilometres northwest of here, would be taken by Tuesday.

General Nhiek Bun Chhay, Prince Ranariddh's top military commander and the Cambodian army's first deputy chief of staff, was headed into the area with 600 troops from Samrong, they said.

A military analyst in Phnom Penh who had contact with soldiers in the northwest Sunday said the situation in Poipet was "tense" but said it was unclear whether Gen. Lay Virak had decided to join the prince's supporters.

"At the moment, I think he is sitting put and not on anybody's side," said the analyst who spoke with Gen. Lay Virak Sunday morning. "It's definitely tense up there, but I'm not aware of any serious clashes yet."

The analyst and other military observers said the entry of Gen. Lay Virak, a former top commander with the U.S.-supported Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) in the 1980s anti-Vietnamese resistance, into the fray would damage the prospects for the negotiated ceasefire in the northwest.

"Those KP guys are probably the best trained soldiers in Cambodia, you want them on your side when the going gets tough," said one diplomat, adding that the prince's side would get a huge morale boost if Gen. Lay Virak joined them.

Prince Ranariddh was effectively ousted by Second Prime Minister Hun Sen after troops loyal to the two co-premiers fought pitched street battles in Phnom Penh earlier this month.

Royalist forces were also believed to have been pushed out of Samrong, some 100 kilometres northeast of here, late last week.

Poipet police under Prince Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC Party command attacked the houses of government troop commanders and a group of Hun Sen's soldiers in fighting heard here overnight, and Sunday morning the injured were taken for treatment in Thailand.

About 100 FUNCINPEC police had fled to a site about two kilometres from Poipet, and the town was tense as soldiers from the two sides milled about with no means to distinguish between them, the 12th Army sources said.

Four government soldiers were killed in the attacks, while six others were injured in the attacks by royalist police, they said.

Two civilians were also injured, they added. Meanwhile, an American journalist with years of experience covering the Khmer Rouge guerrilla movement said

Sunday he had seen its shadowy leader Pol Pot alive in northern Cambodia last week.

Nate Thayer, a correspondent for the Hong Kong-based Far Eastern Economic Review magazine, is believed to have photographs and videotape of Mr. Pol Pot at a "trial" held Friday in a Khmer Rouge jungle base.

"I visited Anlong Veng where I saw Pol Pot," Mr. Thayer told AFP from Bangkok, declining to reveal details of his trip to the rebel stronghold near the Thai border until the review publishes his story Thursday.

The sighting, which the magazine trumpeted Sunday in a pre-publication press release, is the first independent confirmation in around two decades that the architect of Cambodia's "killing fields" is alive.

Cambodian and Thai government and intelligence officials have given contradictory and conflicting accounts about Mr. Pol Pot who was reported to be deathly ill or dead last year.

Most recently, Cambodia's deposed First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, said an ailing Pol Pot had been captured by his former comrades who were considering turning him over to authorities for an international tribunal.

Mr. Thayer, who has had unparalleled access to Khmer Rouge zones, documents and officials since the late 1980s is the first foreign journalist to see Mr. Pol Pot in 18 years and the first journalist to visit Anlong Veng since 1994 when it was briefly taken by Cambodian government forces.

Khmer Rouge clandestine radio Saturday announced that Mr. Pol Pot, the guerrillas' "brother number one," had been convicted of treason at Friday's trial and sentenced to life in prison.

The radio said journalists and "international observers" had been present but did not identify them. Mr. Thayer confirmed that he and a cameraman had been the journalists referred to.

The clandestine radio said "thousands" of supporters and leaders had met in Anlong Veng to "severely sentence Pol Pot and his whole clique" which had "betrayed" the nation.

"The decision of the meeting was to approve a resolution to sentence Pol Pot and his entire clique and to imprison them for their entire lives," the broadcast said.

Diplomats and analysts have scoffed at the "trial" announcement, given the propaganda bent of radio broadcasts.

Even if there was a trial, Khmer Rouge expert Christophe Peschoux said it would not be accepted by the international community which wants the rebels' leaders tried on war crimes and genocide charges. "I am sure that whatever this was, if it was anything, did not meet international standards for a fair trial that would be recognised," said Mr. Peschoux, author of The New Khmer Rouge.

Mr. Pol Pot and the other leaders are blamed for the deaths of up to two million people from execution, starvation and disease during their rule from 1975 to 1979.

Diplomats fear return to war in Angola

LUANDA (R) — Angola's government and its wartime foe, the former UNITA rebel movement, are trading threats and accusations again and diplomats and officials say it could be difficult to prevent a return to war in the country.

"I do not see a way out of this current crisis," said an official close to the peace process.

"I would be surprised if we did not see military confrontation in the near future. The only language understood around here is military language."

In June, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi agreed to a

series of U.N. Security Council proposals designed to salvage the Lusaka Protocol, the 1994 peace agreement ending 20 years of war on which Angola's crumbling peace process is based.

The proposals, among other things, called on UNITA to begin handing over the vast areas it still controls to the government and to provide accurate numbers of its forces.

The Security Council gave the former rebels until Aug. 15 to begin complying but U.N. officials say Mr. Savimbi has so far done little to give the Security Council what it wants.

"UNITA has done nothing so far. And I don't see Savimbi doing much more. You can count on it. He is not going to deliver on the 15th," the official said.

On Wednesday the Security Council said it was ready to consider more sanctions against UNITA, including trade and travel curbs. Fuel and arms embargoes are already in place against UNITA but they have had little effect.

UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, entered into a power-sharing agreement with the government and over 60 of its members

joined the country's National Assembly in April.

But recent military tension, including an army offensive into UNITA-held areas in the north east have significantly weakened any chances of lasting peace in the near future, officials said.

In recent days the government and UNITA have also stepped up verbal attacks and threats on each other.

Angola's minister of defence, Pedro Sebastiao, told parliament including a minority of UNITA deputies, that government claims of UNITA military movements "leads me to believe UNITA wants to take us to war."

Australian premier fights pneumonia as government fights mid-term malaise

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian Prime Minister John Howard will spend most of this week fighting pneumonia in hospital, senior colleagues said as they fended off suggestions Sunday that he is suffering from the strain of office.

Mr. Howard, who spent his 58th birthday Saturday in Sydney's Mater Hospital, had admitted himself on doctor's advice late Friday after a bout of flu and bronchitis developed into what can be a fatal ailment if left untreated.

It comes as he and his government try to shake off another serious condition — severe mid-term malaise caused by a slump in the opinion polls following a string of reversals.

Workplace Relations Minister Peter Reith dismissed suggestions that he or treasurer Peter Costello were positioning themselves as leadership rivals or that the prime minister had pushed himself too hard recently to reverse the polls after a gruelling few weeks.

The latest blow to the government was an embarrassing series of leaked briefing papers labelling leaders of neighbouring South Pacific countries as corrupt, incompetent, drunken or vain.

New Zealand's deputy

leader Winston Peters was described in one of the papers as an ambitious opportunist subject to erratic behaviour.

Mr. Howard was scheduled to meet Mr. Peters and New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger in Melbourne to watch Saturday night's Bledisloe Cup rugby match between Australia and the New Zealand all blacks.

But Mr. Howard had to call off and instead watched Australia being hammered 33-18 on television.

He also heard Mr. Bolger and Mr. Peters make light of the latest Australia gaffe, which caused mirth in New Zealand but outrage elsewhere in the Pacific.

"Look, just because some dingbat galah working for the bureaucracy in Australia says or repeats some things from dingbat media in New Zealand, there is no reason for us to upset relations," Mr. Peters said.

Mr. Costello, whose department helped prepare the papers that were leaked, stood in for Mr. Howard as acting prime minister at the match with Mr. Bolger and Mr. Peters while the popular Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer was still overseas.

Mr. Reith denied Sunday he was eyeing the leader-

ship or that he and treasurer Peter Costello had stepped up their leadership rivalry.

Mr. Howard was generally in good health, and there was no reason why he would not continue as leader, Mr. Reith said, adding: "His condition overnight is unchanged, he is pretty crook though, he's got a bad dose of it, he's going to be out for the best part of the week."

He denied Mr. Howard had pushed himself too hard by trying on his return from a recent disastrous overseas trip to halt the government's slide in the polls.

"As I understand it, he had a schedule set months back and he basically wanted to stick to the schedule that had been organised many months before," Mr. Reith told Channel 9's Sunday programme.

"As far as John is concerned I believe he will be there for a very long time, he's got the political skills to be there, he's got the determination to be there and I think he's a fine prime minister."

"I don't quite frankly have a list of heirs to the throne, we have a pretty strong frontbench."

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Supporters of ousted Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) leader Megawati Sukarnoputri pray on the street watched by anti riot policemen, as they mark the first anniversary of a police-backed raid on party headquarters in Jakarta Sunday. Riot police and troops prevented about 500 supporters of Ms. Megawati who had gathered for the event from coming close to the headquarters itself and many left their flowers on nearby streets (Reuter photo)

Indonesian police block commemoration of riots

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian riot police blocked followers of ousted minority party leader Megawati Sukarnoputri from marking the first anniversary Sunday of a police-backed raid on their offices, witnesses said.

About 500 supporters of Ms. Megawati congregated for a brief silent prayer and then marched towards the headquarters of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), carrying wreaths and flowers they planned to lay on the spot, they said.

But they were blocked by rows of shield-carrying and helmeted riot police and left the area peacefully.

Activists carried the wreaths above their heads and shouted "long live Megawati" as they marched away. Others threw flowers at passing cars and sang a 1940s revolutionary song against Dutch colonial occupation.

The raid on the PDI headquarters on this day last year triggered the worst rioting in Jakarta in more

than two decades. At least five people were killed and scores of buildings and vehicles set ablaze.

Authorities had banned Ms. Megawati supporters from congregating for the anniversary but the activists had said they would defy the order.

"We will continue to fight in the courts. But for today, it is considered finished. We have already expressed our feelings," said one activist, Rombertus Gainadara. Ms. Megawati was not present.

Earlier, hundreds of police and troops blocked off the road in front of the PDI headquarters and asked onlookers to move along. Journalists outside the boarded-up building were also asked to leave.

Troops and police could be seen at major intersections and around government buildings and the homes of President Suharto and Vice-President Try Sutrisno.

Meanwhile, an umbrella

grouping of six youth groups that had been planning to mark the occasion said in a statement that four organisers of the event were taken away for questioning by police Saturday night.

Also Saturday, special prayers were held at Megawati's residence. About 1,000 people attended.

Ms. Megawati, daughter of late founding President Sukarno, said the prayers were to mark the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad, which was celebrated Thursday, and to commemorate the events of a year ago.

"The violent action to take over the PDI headquarters stained the nation's page and gave moral and material losses to many people," she said in a brief speech.

"The violent action defied the principles of Pancasila (Indonesia's state ideology) and God Almighty."

Ms. Megawati was ousted from the PDI leadership by a government-backed rival

in June last year, but her supporters refused to hand over control of the party offices.

On July 27, some 200 followers of her rival attacked the building, watched by hundreds of troops of police, and evicted those within.

Political analysts have said the government moved against Ms. Megawati because authorities feared her growing popularity would affect Mr. Suharto's chances at presidential elections in March 1998.

Mr. Suharto, who took over from Sukarno in the mid-1960s and has ruled Indonesia with a firm grip since then, is almost certain to seek a seventh five-year term at the elections, they have said. He has never been previously opposed.

On Saturday, roadside vendors outside Ms. Megawati's home were selling T-shirts with her picture and the words "presidential candidate" printed below.

Taleban militia fight Afghan opposition alliance on 2 fronts

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's Islamic Taleban militia has fought off rival faction infantry attacks on two fronts around Kabul, an official broadcast here said Sunday.

Taleban-run Radio Shariat reported repulsing attacks Saturday by the Shiite religious faction Hezb-i-Wahdat in southwestern Wardak province, and also by opposition Commander Ahmad Shah Masood north of the capital.

"An offensive by Khalili militia in Shakhak district of Wardak was pushed back yesterday (Saturday). The attackers fled to the nearby mountains leaving behind nine dead bodies," Radio Shariat announced.

Independent sources put the Wahdat frontline a little closer to the Wardak provincial capital Maidan Shahr at the district centre Jalrez. Hezb-i-Wahdat leader Karim Khalili has not yet been able to break through the outer district frontlines and advance against the Taleban-controlled Maidan Shahr.

Maidan Shahr, located 30 kilometres to the southwest of Kabul, sits on the national highway which runs to the Taleban supreme headquarters in Kandahar city to the far south.

In the second attack against them Saturday, the Taleban claimed to have blocked Mr. Masood's forces in Shakardara, a district centre in the lee of the Koh Daman Mountains around 25 kilometres north of the capital.

"An offensive by the forces of evil and corruption and Gilanjam was repulsed in the direction of Shakardara by the Mujahideen of the Islamic army," declared Radio Shariat.

The so-called "Gilanjam" are — along with Masood and Khalili — the third element of the anti-Taleban alliance, the ethnic Uzbek forces under General Abdul Malik.

In May this year Gen. Malik defected to the Muslim militia but turned against them again after a shaky five-day partnership, in a dispute over power-sharing inside the Uzbek fiefdom of the five northern Afghan provinces.

Independent sources have not yet confirmed that Malik's Uzbeks were fighting alongside Masood's predominantly ethnic Tajik forces on the frontlines north of Kabul.

In a surprise attack that started a week ago, Masood inflicted a massive military

blow on the Taleban, forcing them back at least 45 kilometres down the so-called old road towards Kabul.

Parwan provincial capital Charikar and neighbouring Bagram Air Base — which the Taleban had held on and off for eight months — were captured first, followed by the district centres of Istalif, Qarabagh, Guldara and Shakardara.

Journalists have been refused permission to visit the old road frontlines, which according to Afghan evacuees fleeing the factional fighting, were around Hossein Kot village 25 kilometres from Kabul.

Shakardara, which opposition forces claim to control, lies a short distance to the west of Hossein Kot, a one-time private arms Bazaar which later became popular with travellers for its fresh milk products.

An opposition jet buzzed Kabul late Saturday night causing a frenzied response in Taleban anti-aircraft fire, but its target was apparently the frontline areas and not the capital.

No jet strikes or rocket salvos were reported on Kabul early Sunday morning. Locals reported the continuing roundup and

imprisonment of young men of fighting age by the Taleban.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International demanded Friday that the Taleban government release up to 2,000 men whom they claim were taken from their homes and are being held in prison.

The international human rights group said it had received information that the fundamentalist Islamic government had arrested the men from the Tajik and Hazara minorities over the past few days.

"There have been no reports that these men were involved in fighting. Information received indicates that these men have been detained solely because of their identity as minority Tajik and Hazaras," the group said in a statement.

"We would therefore consider them prisoners of conscience and demand their immediate and unconditional release."

Amnesty said the men were being held in appalling conditions, had limited access to food and were reportedly being beaten and ill-treated.

It also believed that they were detained to deter their family members from joining opposition forces.



Two German border policeman drive a speedboat to control the flooded area at the river Oder. Police drive routine patrols to prevent plunder as large areas along the swollen river Oder had to be evacuated because of floods, which have already wreaked havoc in neighbouring Poland and the Czech Republic, poured into Germany (Reuter photo)

Floodwaters burst banks, 2 German villages evacuated

POTSDAM, Germany (AFP) — Floodwaters burst through a dyke overnight creating a one-kilometre breach and threatening to flood villages in eastern Germany, the Brandenburg Interior Ministry said Sunday.

Some 240 inhabitants of Brieskow-Finkenheerd and Wiesenhau, two villages south of Frankfurt An der Oder, were ordered to evacuate. Many of them had already left their homes Sunday morning, a ministry spokesman said.

The dyke that gave way was not on the swollen river Oder itself, but on the nearby Brieskow Lake.

The Emergency Services had to abandon attempts to shore up the dyke, as waters inundated several nearby roads.

The army and volunteers worked flat out Saturday to reinforce dykes along the Oder, where much of the surrounding land lies below the river's usual level.

Authorities warned of new high water levels in the middle of next week, but

said they did not expect a repeat of the massive flooding which has engulfed the region in recent days.

In total, 9,500 people living in the Frankfurt an der Oder area were told to leave their homes after earlier breaches in the dykes Friday.

Rescue workers said the water level had reached the tops of houses in some places.

However some villagers were refusing to go, fearing looters more than flooding.

In Poland, where more

than 50 people have died in recent flooding, an anticipated second wave of inundations proved less destructive than had been feared.

Despite further heavy rain, the Oder stayed within its banks, the Rescue Operation Centre said Sunday.

In Wroclaw, whose residents have suffered three weeks of disruption caused by the flooding, life was returning slowly to normal. Tap water was declared safe for drinking again if boiled first.

French firefighters douse blazes as wind drops

MARSEILLE, France (R) — French firefighters made progress in dousing forest fires around the Mediterranean port of Marseille Sunday after a dip in winds that have whipped up the region's worst blazes in five years.

The fires have charred more than 3,500 hectares of forest and scrubland since Friday, defying the efforts of about 2,000 firefighters, 350 fire engines and eight

planes dumping water on the blazes.

"The situation has stabilised," said Philippe Nardin, head of the firefighters after the region's "mistral" wind calmed to about 30 kph from 100 kph Saturday, when gusts lifted sparks high over fire breaks.

Firefighters expected the fires could be brought under control in several hours.

About 2,000 people have been evacuated from vil-

lages in the path of the flames, including Plan-de-Cuques, Aubagne, Allauch and La Vesse. The flames have burned down or damaged several homes.

Retreating home owners have sprayed the walls of their villas with hoses in a largely vain effort to slow the flames. A total of about 250 people have been treated for smoke inhalation or burns, nine of them in hospital.

The main, original blaze erupted Friday in a rubbish dump near a pine forest in Septemes-Les-Vallons north of the city. The public prosecutor has announced an investigation into the origin of the fire.

During the night, firefighters controlled a separate blaze in Salon-De-provence about 40 kilometres to the northwest. The blaze torched about 120 hectares of scrubland.

Taylor wins landslide victory in Liberia parliament

MONROVIA (R) — Former warlord now President-elect Charles Taylor won an overwhelming majority in Liberia's first post-war parliament Sunday — the West African nation's 150th birthday.

The Independent Elections Commission announced that Mr. Taylor, landslide winner of Liberia's presidential election on July 19, and his National Patriotic Party had won 21 of the 26 seats in the Senate

and 49 of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives.

The victory gives Mr. Taylor, who launched the seven year-old civil war in 1989, absolute powers in both houses.

Mr. Taylor's closest rival Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and her Unity Party won three seats in the Senate and seven in the House. Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf left for the United States Friday, saying she planned to return in August.

Another former warlord, Alhaji Kromah and his All Liberia Coalition Party won two Senate seats and three in the House.

Election Commissioner Henry Andrews declared Mr. Taylor the winner of the presidential poll Thursday.

The elections were the climax of a peace plan brokered by Liberia's West African neighbours to end the war, which killed well over 150,000 people.

Residents of Monrovia

held parties and sporting activities to mark the 150th anniversary of the Republic by freed American slaves.

Former world footballer of the year George Weah, arguably the most famous Liberian, marked the anniversary in his own way — he was opening his own nightclub in downtown Monrovia. The biggest and glitziest in town, it is called The Old School.

Vietnam honours fallen war heroes, wounded veterans

HANOI (AFP) — Vietnam honoured its fallen war heroes and wounded veterans Sunday with nationwide celebrations of the 50th anniversary of War Invalids and Martyrs Day.

Top officials from the Communist Party, the army and the National Assembly marked a debt of gratitude in a solemn ceremony in Hanoi to those who fought for national independence against the French and Americans.

The official Communist Nhan Dan newspaper and the army newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan were devoted nearly exclusively to coverage of the event Sunday.

"When one drinks

water, one must think of the source," wrote the official Vietnam News Agency (VNA), describing the motto of the day to honour more than six million people who gave "great service to the nation."

While nearly half of Vietnam's population is under the age of 25 and have no recollection of war, their parents and grandparents have lost none of their patriotic fervour during peace. Take Nguyen Van Vu, a 68 year-old invalid who fought from 1951 to 1971 and was honoured at a ceremony Saturday in Hanoi. When asked if Vietnam would ever go to war again, his back stiffened with pride and his

voice trembled with emotion.

"If anyone threatens Vietnam we must call on our children and struggle for independence, even until we spill the very last drop of blood."

The Sunday edition of the Vietnam News daily carried an article entitled "agent orange and conscience of American people," chronicling the suffering of millions of people Vietnam claims were affected by the toxic spray used by the United States in the war. The government spends about \$225 million, or about \$90 per person a year supporting some 2.5 million invalids, heroic mothers and orphans, the VNA said.

Nearly 3,000 national and local war martyr cemeteries and 1,000 memorials have been built countrywide.

Earlier this week Vietnam inaugurated the newly refurbished Highway 9 war cemetery and memorial containing the remains of 10,000 soldiers who died in central Quang Tri Province and neighbouring Laos, a region which saw some of the fiercest fighting during the war. Vietnam lost more than three million people in the war against the Americans, and hundreds of thousands fighting the French.

U.S., EU bear down on Cambodia, Burma

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — The United States and the European Union (EU) kept up the pressure on Cambodian strongman Hun Sen and attacked Burma's military regime at a regional security forum here Sunday.

The political crisis in Cambodia following Mr. Hun Sen's effective ouster of co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh dominated the one-day ASEAN Regional Forum involving 21 foreign ministers from Asia, North America and Europe.

The quest for peace in the Korean peninsula and international disarmament efforts were also among the concerns raised in the forum hosted by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Ministers urged Mr. Hun Sen, represented by Foreign Minister Ung Huot, to abide by the terms of the 1991 Paris Peace Accords which

ended decades of civil war in Cambodia and fostered a coalition government which unravelled after heavy fighting in Phnom Penh this month.

ASEAN deferred Cambodia's admission following the power struggle and after Mr. Hun Sen rebuffed the group's efforts to help resolve the crisis. Mr. Hun Sen has since softened its stance but ASEAN is still awaiting a clear statement from him on what its role would be.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the United States "has made it clear to Hun Sen that his cooperation with ASEAN's mediation in this effort is essential if Cambodia is to rejoin fully the international community."

"Our focus now should be on concrete steps to ensure that free and fair elections are held in Cambodia in May of next year," she said,

adding that Prince Ranariddh and other leaders of the royalist FUNCINPEC Party should be allowed to return home safely.

"We expect Hun Sen to respect press freedom and to take steps to depoliticise the Cambodian military. And we should be prepared to monitor the elections to ensure they are free from intimidation," she added.

The harshest words were reserved for new ASEAN member Burma. Mrs. Albright told the forum that "we believe Burma is now an anomaly" within ASEAN, which admitted the country last week despite protests.

Burma and Laos entered ASEAN on July 23, joining Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam in the increasingly influential regional organisation.

Mrs. Albright reiterated charges that Burma's ruling

junta protects and profits from the drug trade, adding that despite its ASEAN credentials, Burma "will remain outside the South East Asian mainstream and isolated from the global economy until accountable government is restored."

The EU has ruled out aid to Burma until it makes progress toward political reforms, Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos said Sunday.

Mr. Poos, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, reiterated that the EU had no intention of extending a cooperation agreement it signed with ASEAN states to Burma.

He welcomed as a "very positive" development a statement by the Cambodian foreign minister accepting ASEAN mediation in his country's political conflict.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

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Bronze Age stone monuments face destruction

By Afia Shukri Hamzeh
Special to the Jordan Times

DOLMENS, STONE monuments dotting the Jordanian countryside, might disappear as they are being vandalised by tomb robbers and road projects. "Friends of archaeology" warn.

Dolmens, ancient monuments made of stone slabs, go back to the Bronze Age, to about 2000-3000 years BC. They are similar to the famous Stonehenge monument in England and monoliths in France and Spain.

Typically dolmens consist of thick flat stone slabs: two or four upright blocks form the sides and a large slab on top forms the roof; they are referred to by scientists as "stone tables", or box-like and hut-like structures.

Dr. Mohammed Waheeb, an archaeologist at the Department of Antiquities, attributes the destruction of these dolmens to two elements: "The first is nature which, with its erosion factors like rain, wind and sand, causes the decay and downfall of the stones. The second is the human factor; the destructive nature of man pauses a constant threat to monuments in Jordan".

He said that "the government has to face and cope with greedy habits of tomb robbers seeking gold, in addition to ignorant people making quarries out of the areas where dolmens are located. There are also construction sites and road projects that destroy dolmens in the area".

Another important human factor contributing to the destruction of dolmens is agriculture; their presence on many farming lands limits the use of farmers to these lands, so farmers tend to destroy them in order to benefit from the entire piece of land, according to Dr. Waheeb.

The purpose of these dolmens is still not fully established; some believe them to be places of worship to the gods of the sky and earth, which they justify by the shape the stones are structured.

Fouad Qsous, a pharmacist by profession and a novelist, explained that the Bronze Age man believed that all things related to life, birth and fertility depended on a great female god, represented by their stones in the shape of a woman's womb (triangular).

In time, their idea of it

evolved to two gods: a god of the skies and a god of the earth. The god of the sky would bring rain, thunder and lightning which, in turn, after the storm has subsided, would make life and greenery bloom on earth. The place of the storm would represent the visit of the male god, recognised as the thunder and lightning, to the earth god.

"This process was pictured in the structure of the dolmens: they are built in a circular form, made up of big stones looking like a horseshoe and surrounding a stone in the middle, representing the female god. Close by, as if put in random order, is a tall stone pillar representing the male god. The significance of this pillar can be seen on the longest day of the year: when the sun rises, the stone casts its shadow which moves slowly until it reaches the middle of the horseshoe shape stones to settle on top the stone in the middle that represents the female god; then it withdraws, signifying the marriage of the two gods and insuring a lasting life and a new year of fertility," Mr. Qsous said.

Others, however, tend to

believe that the dolmens are grave sites, due to the fact that some skeletal remains have been found in chambers built below the floor slabs of the dolmen.

"This lower chamber was constructed exactly underneath the megalith's upper structure; it was built on a stone pavement and formed a subterranean structure that was in fact a prototype of the upper structure into which the bodies would be placed," says an article in the book "Archaeology of Jordan: Essays and Reports" by Kheir Yassine.

"One of these Dolmens was moved from the Damiyah site and placed in front of the Jordan University Museum to be safe and protected and to be looked at and appreciated by students of the university. This way, we would be protecting the dolmen and educating the younger generation on their cultural heritage," Dr. Waheeb said.

Artist and archaeologist Ammar Khammash believes otherwise: "Moving this dolmen from its place of origin to another spot is more harmful than beneficial, because by moving a monument, we would be cutting it off from its context and planting it in



Standing dolmen (above) and monuments destroyed by nature of vandalism (below left)

a totally different environment; thus, the contextual preservation is lost and we end up as merely selling an item and not telling the whole story behind it."

He also referred to another procedure the government uses to protect monuments: buying land plots containing all these monuments, fencing them and appointing a guard to protect and watch over them. This, according to Mr. Khammash, is rather impractical and needs a great deal of money, in addition to the fact that "they cannot buy every piece of land that happens to have a monument, plus those who own the land may not want to sell it. They could even demand too much money for the land."

The dolmens are located in many areas around Jordan; they spread from Kafr Youbia, in Irbid, to Al Mutawik Mountain, on the Mafraq-Irbid road; some are located in Jerash and Madaba and in the Jordan Valley. Damiyah has around 164 recorded dolmens, but the estimated number is close to 200.

Dr. Fawaz Ziadeen, research assistant at the

Department of Antiquities, said that most of the dolmens destroyed and vandalised by either road constructions or tomb robbers are in the area between Madaba and Karak, in the Wadi Valley, Al Mureighat and Kafr Abeel.

Dr. Waheeb said that "preservation of these monuments is hard, especially due to the natural factors and knowing that the government has very limited resources, and the procedure is very expensive."

As far as the human factor is concerned, he said that "there should be better cultural and social awareness, people should be educated more on their history, books should be published and distributed on a large scale to reach the average man and not just the archaeologists and specialised people."

Mr. Khammash said that "because we do not have a good information system, many people would not regard the dolmens as an archaeological object; instead, they would be passed by unnoticed, due to the fact that the whole perspective on archaeology relates to Roman, beautifully cut stones and not early

dolmens, representing the first step between nature and man shaped stone."

Therefore, the solution, according to him, lies in good governmental management: "They should come up with a plan of management of the cultural heritage, starting with performing surveys on all locations in the country and providing the public with a comprehensive map that includes all the needed information."

Then, limit excavations or stop them; since excavation in itself means systematic destruction of the sites, especially at the hands of a bad archaeologist, the government should limit excavations and shift gears from underground to above-ground in order to focus more on surface survey."

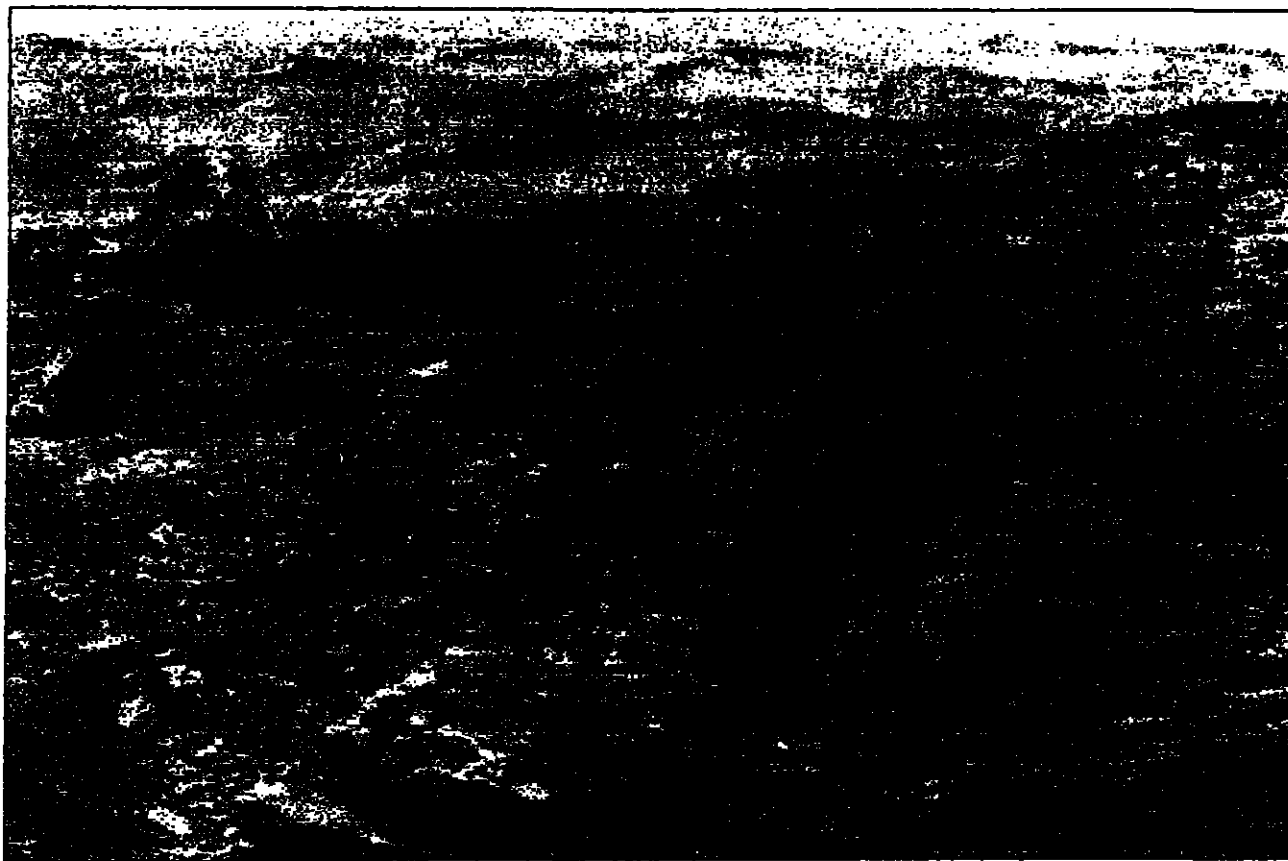
"There is so much cultural heritage and so few resources and our management ability is so bad that the more we excavate the more management burdens we have," he added.

He suggested publishing more information on all the monuments, providing explanations of them, appointing interpreters to explain and rewrite archaeological

reports and making them accessible to the wider public. "And, most important, give the whole story behind the site and not just limit it to a certain monument, without including the entire background."

"We have to undo years of wrong advertisement on Jordanian archaeology, shift it from monument centric to their total landscape, and try to present the whole thing as a full fabric not just the ornamental centre of the fabric. Only then people would stop harming or vandalising their cultural heritage," Mr. Khammash concluded.

Mr. Qsous, in an article in Al Ra'i newspaper, wrote about the destruction of these monuments saying: "We do not try to find out more about these monuments. We merely presume that the government alone is the part responsible for their protection and for safeguarding them from any harm, while we have nothing to contribute to that act, which is rather sad and shocking. Bulldozers opening a road to a nearby mountain would destroy everything in site or even make quarries of these stones."



Jordan wins soccer gold

(Continued from page 1)

return. Sizeable rewards await the team with pledges by various companies and individuals reaching over JD 100,000 until press time.

Syria were reduced to ten men late in the first half when the Lebanese referee booked a player. Jordan's Munir Abu Hantash and Ra'fat Ali lost scoring chances before Tadros, who joined the action in the second half, scored the game-winning goal.

The match, which was disrupted for a few moments by angry Syrian fans following the Jordanian goal, capped two weeks of competition in which 3,000 athletes from 19 countries took part.

As Syria settled for the silver medal Lebanon took the bronze after a 3-1 win over Kuwait in the match deciding 3rd and 4th places.

Jordanians again took to the streets following the match honking horns and waving flags in celebration just as they did when the

team scored a landmark 3-2 win over Kuwait to qualify for the final for the first time.

Syria had overcome Lebanon 3-2 in the other semi-final to qualify for the final.

Jordan's team impressed onlookers and upset expectations by winning the gold especially as the achievement came after eliminating Kuwait — a team with an impressive record in Asia and a World Cup qualifier in 1982 — to advance to the final.

Eight countries took part in the soccer event. Group 1 included Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Libya while Group 2 included Kuwait, the UAE, Syria and Mauritania.

Only the top two teams in each group qualified to the second round.

Jordan and Lebanon qualified from Group 1 while Syria and Kuwait qualified Group 2.

Jordan beat Oman 3-1, and drew 1-1 with Libya and Lebanon. Syria beat the UAE 3-1, Kuwait 2-1 and Mauritania 1-0.

Jordan, Palestine lash out at settlement plans

(Continued from page 1)

Amoud in east Jerusalem. The Arab population of Ras Al Amoud is estimated at 11,000 people.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu informed Palestinian officials Saturday that his government will stop the building of the Jewish neighbourhood "at this time."

"Mr. Netanyahu's position was positive on this particular issue, and as we came to know, this issue will be postponed at this time. We have to return to realism and work in the direction of pushing the peace process forward and not backward," Dr. Tarawneh said.

Mr. Abbas and Dr. Tarawneh, who met for one hour, said their talks Sunday were part of the American, European and Egyptian efforts to resume the

peace talks between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel.

"These meetings are aimed at pushing the peace process ahead... We have discussed the ways to remove the obstacles in the path of the peace process and bring it to a happy end," Mr. Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, said.

Mr. Tarawneh denied speculations that arrangements were under way to hold a three-party summit, that would include Jordanian, Palestinian and Egyptian officials, but noted that political contacts between these parties have not been halted and are continuing.

"The Arab meetings are continuing whether in the form of contacts or meetings. When the (Arab) leaders feel that there is a necessity for this matter (summit), it will take place," Dr. Tarawneh said. "But let me

emphasise that the trilateral contacts are at their peak," he added.

The minister said meetings between Jordanian and Palestinian trade officials, which started on Saturday in Amman, were aimed at "overcoming the problems" that impede the flow of goods between Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule areas.

"These problems and obstacles are from our side and their side (the Palestinians), and we have to solve them... there is a third party (Israel) which exists and we both have to organise (trade) relationships with it," Dr. Tarawneh stressed.

Dr. Tarawneh denied reports of a Jordanian "initiative" to break the ice in the talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, but affirmed that Jordanian-Palestinian talks were part of other efforts in the

region. According to Mr. Abbas, European Union efforts, spearheaded by the EU envoy, Miguel Moratinos, to achieve a breakthrough in the Palestinian-Israeli talks were "positive" but they should "be supported by American and Arab efforts."

Mr. Abbas' visit to the Kingdom is the fourth by a Palestinian official in less than four weeks.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath, PNA minister in charge of the Jerusalem file, Faisal Hussein, and Mr. Abbas held separate talks with Jordanian officials on a previous visit this month.

Last week, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali visited the West Bank town of Ramallah and met with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

U.S. Jewish magnate insists can build in Arab Jerusalem

(Continued from page 1)

It's a democratic country," he said.

Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians have slammed the plan as a dire threat to peace despite Netanyahu's vow to block the project. Mr. Netanyahu Saturday contacted all three, as well as Washington, to say he had no intention to build at present.

The approval came with relations between Israel and the Palestinians already in crisis over Israel's breaking ground in March on the

Jabal Abu Ghneim settlement on an Arab east Jerusalem hilltop.

"You can't allow this provocative project to... further bury the peace process and spark bloodshed," Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's adviser Ahmad Tibi told army radio.

Palestinians want Arab east Jerusalem, occupied by Israel from Jordan in 1967, as capital of a future state. Israel views all of the city as its "united, eternal" capital.

Biological inspectors start job in Iraq after end of Butler visit

(Continued from page 1)

complained that the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was trying to hide weapons and documents from inspectors.

However, Mr. Butler also said in Kuwait after leaving Baghdad that he expected the job of destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction would not finish for "a long time."

The elimination of Iraq's dangerous weapons was called for by the U.N. Security Council after the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait in 1990, leading to the 1991 Gulf war that drove the Iraqis out of the neighbouring Arab state.

The Security Council imposed sanctions on Iraq — including a ban on exporting oil — and said the sanctions would not be lifted until U.N. inspectors determined that Iraq's hazardous

weapons and arms manufacturing systems had been destroyed.

The team headed by Mr. Kraatz-Wadsack includes nine outside experts who have been joined by two officials from the permanent Baghdad monitoring office, Mr. Lomas said.

Mr. Butler took over from Mr. Ekeus, a Swede, on July 1.

The visits of Mr. Butler and the weapons inspection team coincide with U.N. study of an Iraqi food distribution plan under the oil-for-food deal reached between the United Nations and Iraq.

Last year, the Security Council approved a plan for Baghdad to sell \$2 billion in oil over six months and buy food and medicines with the revenues. Iraq submitted the food distribution plan in line with plans for it to sell another \$2 billion in oil over the next six months.

Eight die in Belgian air show crash, one critical

(Continued from page 1)

flew immediately over the spectators.

A Belgian aviation expert said the German-made Falcon XT 300 had failed to pull up, which could point to mechanical failure.

Alternatively, the pilot could have passed out during a series of horizontal spins which involve great strain on plane and pilot from the forces of gravity. "there appears to have been no reaction by the pilot," he said.

Eyewitness Patrick Beugnot told Reuters: "I saw one small plane make strange movements about 100 metres away. It

crashed, there was a sea of flames and thick black smoke."

It fell on a first aid post at the edge of the spectator area. "My father, standing next to me, saw the white canvas fly up and then there were flames... nothing was left of the plane."

Asked on Belgian radio whether safety rules had been obeyed, Vande Lanotte said: "for as far as we can see now, yes."

Ostende airport director, Luc Van Bouwel told Reuters he had been worried about holding air shows at civil airports. "I think this kind of show is better performed at a military base."

A British pilot said at the show, "this is no more dangerous than driving... By the way, most people die in their beds."

Sunday's displays at the two-day show in Ostende were cancelled because of the crash but authorities in the eastern Belgian town of Hechtel said a show there would be held as planned, but safety measures would be stepped up.

King Albert and Queen Paola interrupted their holidays in Italy and flew back to Belgium to join Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene to pay their respects to the dead at an Ostende mortuary.

They were joined by

members of the Royal Falcons team and the Jordanian ambassador in Belgium, Omayya Toukan.

"We were 11, now we are 10," a team member said. The Falcons would not fly at Hechtel, but was to return back home later on Sunday.

Mr. Toukan said the dead pilot, 28 and married without children, would be flown home on a special flight later on Sunday.

In the world's worst air show disaster at Ramstein, Germany, in August 1988, 70 people died when three Italian jets collided in mid-air. One burst into flames and ploughed into the crowd.

U.S., U.K. aim to 'kill more Iraqis,' charges Baghdad

(Continued from page 1)

at the end of 1996 to finance imports of food and medicine, as well as to pay reparations for the 1991 Gulf war and to finance U.N. operations in Iraq.

U.N. sanctions have been in force since Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Health Minister Umid Medhat Mubarak, who along with Mr. Saleh attended the opening of a Syrian pharmaceutical fair in Baghdad, said Iraq has received only 1.4 per cent of medicine due over the first six months of the U.N. accord.

The value of the medicine delivered to date is "not more than \$3 million," he said.

Iraq was to have received \$210 million worth of medicine and sanitary equipment by June, and only half of the 2.3 million tonnes of food products have so far been delivered.

But Eric Falt, spokesman for the coordinator of U.N. humanitarian affairs in Iraq, calculated earlier this month that Baghdad has received seven million dollars worth of medicine, or three per cent of its allocation.

Aqaba port to cut charges for exporters

AMMAN (R) — Jordan's Aqaba port will soon halve its loading charges on container cargo exports to boost sales of local goods in outside markets and help attract more regional business, shippers said Sunday.

The move applies to all container traffic of Jordanian or non-Jordanian origin exported via the Kingdom's Red Sea Port of Aqaba and is expected to come into effect early next month after it is published in the Official Gazette.

The Aqaba Ports Authority's recommendation has already won cabinet approval.

But it excludes empty containers and bulk cargo exported under bilateral protocols such as the country's main foreign currency earners: potash and phosphates cargo mostly sold to traditional markets in long-term supply deals, they said.

"It will give exporters a boost but we hope it will

not be offset by the port imposing a new tax on export freight," said Talal Halawani, head of Jordan's Maltrans Shipping Agents. It will give a boost to reexports of live sheep and sugar to neighbouring markets and would apply to transit goods from neighbouring countries such as Syria and Iraq if trade sanctions are lifted on Baghdad, shippers say.

Loading costs on a 20 foot container will drop to 9.6 dinars (\$14) from 19.2 dinars while a 40 foot container's charges will drop to 15 dinars against a previous 30 dinars.

Aqaba port, which has grown as a regional port serving primarily the Iraqi market, has been gradually reducing tariffs to enhance its competitiveness as a regional transit port. It has sought more business opportunities offered by Iraq's U.N. oil-for-food deal.

Palestinian jobless rate stays high

AL BIREH, West Bank (R) — The Palestinian Bureau of Statistics said Saturday the unemployment rate in Palestinian areas remained high in the second quarter of 1997 despite a slight drop from the previous two months.

The bureau had calculated unemployment rates for two-month periods beginning in September 1995. The current survey reflects the bureau's new policy of issuing the figures quarterly.

Hassan Abu Libdeh, head of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), said unemployment stood at 18.9 per cent in the second quarter of 1997, down from 19.5 per cent in February and March of this year.

"Despite the slight decline in the unemployment rate, it is still one of the highest in the world," Mr. Abu Libdeh told Reuters.

In April-May 1996, unemployment stood at 28.4 per cent.

Israel has periodically sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip since parts of those areas came under Palestinian rule in 1994 under a plo-Israel peace deal.

One of the strictest closures was imposed in 1996 after a series of militant suicide attacks killed 59 people in Israel. It accounted for higher unemployment rates in 1996.

Giving figures for the main Palestinian regions, Mr. Abu Libdeh said the unemployment rate in the West Bank stood at 15.6 per cent in the second quarter of 1997, down from 17.7 per cent in the prior two months. Unemployment in the Gaza Strip rose to 26.3 per cent compared to 24.1 per cent in the prior two months.

Unemployment in the West Bank in April-May 1996 was 24.3 per cent. It was 39.1 per cent in Gaza in that period.

Mr. Abu Libdeh said the productive labour force made up 40.9 per cent of the 2.64 million population of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and that 16.6 per cent of the productive labour force worked in Israel in the second quarter compared to 18.6 per cent in February and March.

Closures, which Palestinians label collective punishment, prevent thousands of Palestinian workers from reaching jobs in Israel and have caused a change in Palestinian employment patterns, the official said.

"We found that many men have started doing what traditionally were women's jobs such as working in the textile industry," he added.

Mr. Abu Libdeh said a Palestinian worker earned an average daily wage of \$14 in the West Bank, \$11 in Gaza Strip and \$28 in Israel.

Oman shelves Dubai gas project

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf state of Oman has abandoned plans to supply natural gas to neighbouring Dubai because of its limited gas reserves, Oman's oil minister said in press comments.

Said Ibn Ahmad Al Shanfari said his ministry had considered plans to provide the main Gulf trade centre with natural gas through a pipeline.

"We would like to do so but our limited reserves have blocked this project,"

he told the United Arab Emirates (UAE) economic weekly Emirates Today.

"Our reserves do not cover local needs and exports at the same time. But we hope to find more gas in future so we will carry out such projects," he said.

The U.S. company promoting the pipeline, AMOCO, said last month that the project had been put on hold because Oman wanted to concentrate on a gas liquefaction scheme.

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8385	0.6017	1.5168	116.83	1.3810	1787.00	2.0705	6.1960
DE Mark	0.5439	1.0000	0.3270	0.8249	63.54	0.7910	971.72	1.1263	3.3700
GB Sterling	1.6620	3.0575	1.0000	2.5168	194.38	2.2952	2969.99	3.4412	10.2978
CH Franc	0.6594	1.2115	0.3963	1.0000	77.01	0.9100	1177.59	1.3684	4.0830
JP Yen	0.0086	1.5730	0.8145	1.2975	1.0000	1.1818	152.28	1.7715	5.3012
CA Dollar	0.7241	1.3279	0.4346	1.0950	1.18	1.0000	1290.72	1.4958	4.4753
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0282	0.3363	0.8848	1632.10	0.7724	1.0000	11.58	3.4653
NL Guilder	0.4830	0.8875	0.2903	0.7323	56.37	0.6667	862.86	1.0000	2.9811
FR Franc	0.1614	0.2966	0.0970	0.24678	18.83	0.2228	33.41	33.4100	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUN	AED	LYB	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7500	0.3770	3.6395	0.3041	3.6726	1539.00	3.3825
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2900	0.5317	5.1333	0.4290	5.1800	2170.65	4.7708
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	1.0000	0.1005	0.97	0.0811	0.98	410.33	0.9019
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8806	9.3485	1.0000	9.65	0.8067	9.74	4082.23	8.9721
Qatar Dinar	0.2748	0.1948	1.0305	1.0305	1.0000	0.8336	1.01	422.88	0.8294
Kuwait Dinar	3.2831	2.3312	12.3322	1.2398	11.97	1.0000	12.08	5060.34	0.8294
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1931	1.0212	1.0212	0.9910	0.8828	1.00	419.05	0.9210
Lebanese 1000	0.85	0.4607	2.4370	0.2450	2.3648	0.1976	2.3884	1.0000	2.1979
Egyptian	0.2566	0.2096	1.1088	0.1115	1.0760	0.0899	1.0858	454.99	1.0000

Energy

Oil	Last	Today
Brent	19.22	19.11
WTI	19.58	19.58
Bonny	19.22	19.11
Dubai	17.13	17.13
UL Gas	196.00	192.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4903	0.18042	0.4046	31.1633
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.50073	0.16363	0.41319	31.8248
KW Dinar	3.2881	6.04595	1.97824	4.99002	384.32
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.87805	1.59991	4.02576	309.981
CY Pound	1.8533	3.4073	1.1144	2.8105	216.521

Metal Prices

Metal	Unit	Price
Gold (oz's)	325.45	325.95
Silver (oz's)	4.33	4.35
Platinum (oz's)	423.5	426.8
AL (3 Months)	1682	1687
CU (3 Months)	2382	2387
Zinc (3 Months)	1625	1630
Lead (3 Months)	653	658
Ni (3 Months)	7200	7250

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Currency	Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
USD	5.53	5.82	5.71	5.90
GBP	6.75	6.83	7.25	7.12
JPY	0.56	0.65	0.88	0.75
DEM	3.03	3.06	3.18	3.12
FRF	3.23	3.28	3.38	3.46
CHF	1.53	1.53	1.60	1.59
ITL	8.78	8.80	8.70	8.51

Main Equity Indices

Index	Value	Change	High	Low	Open
New York DOW JONES	8113.44	-3.49	8157.11	8080.45	8116.53
New York S&P 500	938.79	-1.49	945.65	938.09	940.28
London FTSE 100	4851.5	-11.4	4861.2	4834.8	4862.9
Tokyo Nikkei 225	20389.54	103.31	20389.5	20363.7	20286.2
Paris CAC 40	3025.94	52.41	3030.82	2987.46	2973.53
Frankfurt DAX	4317.84	-18.1	4350.49	4306.88	4335.74

Energy

Commodity	Last	Today
Coffee (c/lbs)	193.83	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1829	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	342.5	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	142	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	21.42	Spot
Tea (c/lbs)	137	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot

JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1752	1.1811
DE Mark	0.3847	0.3866
CH Franc	0.4665	0.4684
FR Franc	0.1141	0.1147
JP Yen	0.805	0.808
NL Guilder	0.3414	0.3431
IT Lira	0.3956	0.3976

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan

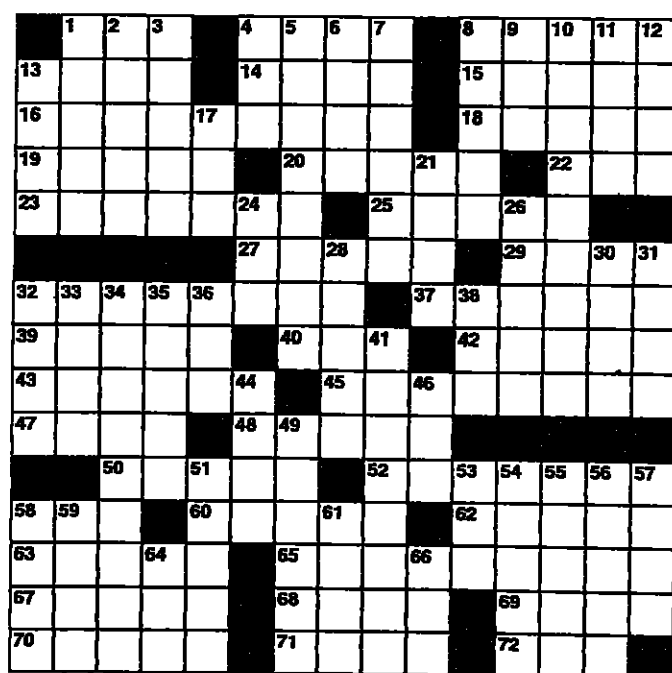
THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 —, amas, amat
- 4 Goddess of Olympus
- 8 Box
- 13 Grandparental
- 14 Skating maneuver
- 15 Helped
- 16 Malicious destruction
- 18 Spoke with enthusiasm
- 19 Enroll
- 20 Pore of a leaf
- 22 Some
- 23 Ogle
- 25 — example (be a model)
- 27 Beau —
- 29 At the peak
- 32 Faithless one
- 37 Harangue
- 39 Enjoyed avidly
- 40 Spigot
- 42 Theater stalls
- 43 Stephen King novel
- 45 Most verdant
- 47 Part of TAE
- 48 Pure
- 50 Solo
- 52 Diabolical
- 58 Heir
- 60 Let
- 62 "Don Giovanni," e.g.
- 63 Name
- 65 Canadian city
- 67 New York city
- 68 "Brute?"
- 69 Mysterious poem
- 70 Property
- 71 Aerie
- 72 Vane letters

DOWN

- 1 — garde
- 2 Horse blanket
- 3 Senior
- 4 Shakespearean prince
- 5 Current
- 6 What's left
- 7 Not quite
- 8 Gem weight
- 9 Inlet



by Florence C. Adler

Monday's Puzzle solved:

OASIS	MASS	WHOA
ALICE	ASTI	RAIN
TIGER	ICON	ISLE
HAND	MED	DOWN
STEW		
ORGANS	GROW	
ROAR	YORE	SALAD
CALMS	MEN	ETUDE
ANEST	IDEA	CRAM
SCHEM		
SHEAF	SOHO	
THEN	FINGER	FOOD
HUNG	ETAL	SERAI
ISNT	RAKE	EAGRE
SHAH	SLAKED	TRYST

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- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 53 In addition | 58 Portico |
| 54 River of | 59 Some paintings |
| 55 Venezuela | 61 Glut |
| 56 Birimark | 64 New Guinea |
| 57 Maintenance | 68 Spit |

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY, JULY 28, 1997
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Labour on getting your accounts in better order. Your mate may need today some special attention from you. You should avoid a difficult acquaintance later this evening who has different motives.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Give your support today to a close friend who is doing some great and selfless career activities for the community. You should not take any financial risks later this evening or a difficult situation could develop.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure to avoid any confrontations today with fellow associates. It is very important that you control your temper later this evening or you could get in hot water with your loved ones who could make your life difficult.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A disagreement with a fellow associate today will ruin your efficiency and put everyone in a bad mood, so try to avoid letting this happen. Later this evening will be good for going out on the town with your mate.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If a close friend makes a thoughtful remark today, you should not take it personally. Be very careful about spending money later this evening, and also while driving on the highway to avoid any difficult situations.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There is a lack of harmony in your home today, so you should not invite any guests in until the aspects are more favourable. Be careful of a scheming fellow associate, and protect your assets, so you will have some in an emergency.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Financial matters require more attention than usual today. Be very careful in motion of any kind, however, especially while driving on the highway. Later this evening will be good for seeing knowledgeable people.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get your small chores out of the way early today, since later you may have to handle a vital important business matter. Later this evening will be good for meeting with fellow associates and make a plan of action for success.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Avoid any friends who seem to be in a strange mood later this evening. With the assistance of a trusted adviser today, you can score big financially and thereby have some extra fun so that you don't become short.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Use tact in reconciling a difficult situation between yourself and a close friend. Spend the evening relaxing at home with your mate and your loved ones, thereby you can be prepared for the next few hectic days.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be sure to handle all business matters carefully today, since later this evening you may be asked to explain your actions. Think before you speak, thereby you won't say anything which could be misinterpreted.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If a new venture is to be successful today, be sure you have all the background information before you act. You should not do anything to upset your mate later this evening, thereby avoiding any differences of opinion.

BIRTHSTONE OF JULY:
Pearl — Ruby — Tiger's Eye

The Style Season

DA JANI Jewellers

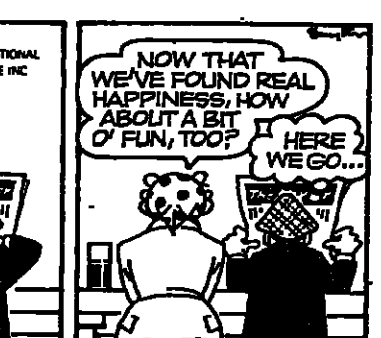
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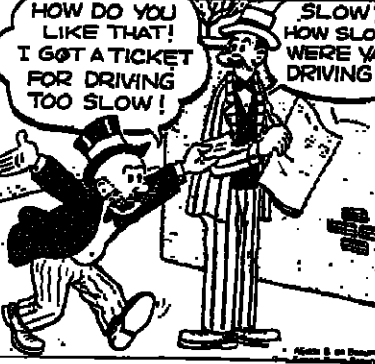
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Insurance co announce

Insurance companies are announcing new policies and rates. The Jordanian Insurance Company (JIC) and the Jordanian Reinsurance Company (JRC) have announced new policies and rates. The JIC has announced a new policy for life insurance, while the JRC has announced a new policy for fire insurance. Both companies have also announced new rates for their existing policies.

Car insurance

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Insurance companies likely to announce merger this week

By Issam Qadmani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — It is almost certain that the Yarmouk Insurance and Reinsurance Company (YIRC) and the Arab Union Insurance Company (AUC) will agree to merge this week in order to raise their capital to JD2 million in line with the provisions of the new insurance law which will come into effect as of Oct. 1.

The merger decision will be announced after ensuring the approval of the general assemblies of both companies.

The general assembly of the AUC will convene an

extraordinary session today to decide on the merger, while the YIRC will follow suit soon.

The Yarmouk company, with a capital of JD 1 million and the Arab Union with a capital of JD 800,000, hope to be able to raise their capital to JD 2 million by using part of the voluntary reserve to cover the JD 200,000 difference. Observers expect that both companies will gain additional strength by combining their assets to reach approximately JD7 million.

The Jordanian Insurance Federation companies has requested the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply to extend the Oct. 1 deadline for another year, but no response has been received so far by the ministry.

By demanding that the deadline be extended for another year, insurance companies seek to make up for the losses of about JD5 million incurred last year as a result of a drop in the overall insurance premiums, an increase in the number of insurance companies, and the stiff competition in a limited market.

In a bid to raise their capital, in case their negotiations with the ministry on the extension of the deadline fail, insurance companies withheld profits and did not distribute any to shareholders.

Total CBJ assets rise to JD3.32 billion

By Abdul Salam Gharaibeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Total Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) assets at the end of last month amounted to JD3.32 billion, an increase of 3.5 per cent over the month of May when the total stood at JD3.20 billion. However, the total assets at the end of June were lower by 3.3 per cent than the total at the end of December 1996.

The total assets in Jordanian currency amounted to JD1.10 billion at the end of last month, but out of this amount nearly JD406.3 million were government bonds and securities, JD676.4 million advances and discounted bills, JD7.4 million shares of local financial institutions and JD121.9 million of others assets.

Gold reserves at the CBJ were estimated at JD141.5 million, an increase of 1.6 per cent over the same period of last year.

The CBJ reserves of foreign and convertible currency amounted to JD1.1 billion in cash and JD56.9 million in foreign bonds, JD198.7 million in trade exchange assets, JD692.5 million in shares of international and regional financial institutions, and 31.5 million dinars in non-convertible foreign currency.

The total off-balance sheet items totalled JD245.3 million.

The total amount of issued currency was JD1.04 billion, current accounts and deposits in Jordanian currency totalled JD1.6 billion and current accounts and convertible foreign currencies amounted to JD446.5 million.

Al Ra'i boosts profit by 78%

By Samir Ghawi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A decline in the international prices of paper reflected positively on the performance of the Jordan Press Foundation Company with production costs of publishing the Arabic daily Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times dropping by 11.4 per cent.

Taking into consideration that newspaper sales rose by 18 per cent and that income from advertisements remained at the high level posted at midyear of '96, the operating profit surged by 54.5 per cent rising from JD0.98 million recorded at the end of June of last year to JD1.52 million at the end of last month.

According to the balance sheet as of June 30, 1997, newspaper sales increased from JD1.09 million to JD1.28 million and earnings from ads stayed at the mid-year 1996 level of JD3.3 million. As such the gross earnings amounted to JD4.58 million at midyear '97 compared to JD4.43 million at the end of June 1996. With production costs falling from JD3.46 million to JD3.06 million and after taking into account other income and expenses the net profit stood at JD1.14 million, 78.4 per cent higher than the JD0.64 million net profit posted at the end of June 1996.

Other figures shown in the balance sheet as of June 30, 1997 were a decline in the company's indebtedness to banks, as total credits fell from JD0.99 million at the end of June 1996 to only JD0.372, and a rise in bank deposits, which climbed from about JD7,000 at the end of June 1996 to around JD1.10 million.

The short-term portion of a long-term debt also fell from JD500,000 to JD250,000.

Current liabilities declined from JD2.7 million to JD1.41 million, and current assets from JD6.62 million to JD5.98 million mainly due to a drop in inventory of raw materials by about JD1.79 million.

Fixed assets stood at JD6.62 million after deducting accumulated depreciation noting that the value of the fixed assets was JD6.93 million at the end of June 1996.

Total shareholders equity increased from JD10.37 million to JD10.94 million, of which JD1.23 million were in obligatory reserves, JD1.85 million in voluntary reserves and JD4.50 million in allowances of share issuance.

Switzerland found most expensive country in Europe

BERN (AFP) — Switzerland is the most expensive country in Europe and is beaten only by Luxembourg in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) per person, a Federal Statistics Office study issued here said.

Switzerland in 1995 scored 143.3 points against a European average of 100 points on prices covering the entire range of its goods and services, the study said.

Denmark ranked as the second dearest country, followed by Norway and Germany while Greece and Portugal were at the bottom of the price league.

Luxembourg had the highest level of GDP per capita calculated in dollars, with Germany, Austria and France trailing Switzerland.

Syrian delegation displays medical products in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Representatives of Syrian medical and pharmaceutical companies are in Baghdad for a business fair marking a further warming of ties between Iraq and Syria, the press has reported.

Around 40 Syrian companies are taking part in the three-day fair from Sunday, an event made possible by the improvement in relations between Baghdad and Damascus since May.

Syrian delegation leader Nael Al Nabulsi said in remarks to newspapers that the Syrian companies wanted to secure contracts to sell medical supplies to sanctions-hit Iraq.

Syria and Iraq, which are ruled by rival wings of the Baath Party and severed ties in 1980, reopened their border to businessmen in June after a closure of 15 years.

Iraq, under sanctions imposed after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990, has asked for U.N. approval to import goods through the Syrian border under an oil-for-food deal.

A delegation of Iraqi industrial leaders is due in Damascus in the next few days to examine ways of boosting trade.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Rent-a-car insurance seen as 'continuing losses'

** RAOUF ABU Jaber, president of the Jordan Insurance Federation, described the insurance on "rent-a-car" vehicles as "continuing losses" and called for putting additional conditions on this type of business. He said there is no justification for an exaggerated rise in the number of rent-a-car offices noting that the accidents involving the vehicles of those offices are many and deaths resulting from such accidents are increasing. Dr. Abu Jaber saw a need to have an age limit for anyone wishing to rent and drive a car and to minimise the number of rental offices.

Commenting on the increase in the number of insurance companies in the market and the requirement to raise the capital to at least JD2 million for each company, Dr. Abu Jaber said the capital of 13 companies operating with a JD25 million capital will nearly double upon adjusting to the requirement of capital increase.

"Since the insurance law was amended, the number of companies became 25, carrying a nominal capital of JD62.4 million of which JD33.2 million has been paidup and the rest is being settled," the federation president indicated. He said that a gross premium of about JD78 million was collected in 1995 but the amount increased to JD85 million. However, he added, the volume of premiums is low compared to the number of companies operating in a tight market.

Dr. Abu Jaber said that the new companies which entered the market did not achieve any profit and have posted operational losses that varied from one company to another with most of the money going to build up obligatory technical reserves. He expected varied but limited reserves in 1997 due to the tight market and the stiff competition.

Observers are more inclined to say that "the companies will eat each other" and close 1997 with general losses. The observers even see the merger option for some of the main shareholders as unfavourable as that would entail losing senior posts and other advantages (Al Ra'i).

THE BETTER HALF



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KEJOR

MERIG

HACING

BOIFLE

Print answer here: THE

Yesterday's Jumbles: VALET NAIVE GENTRY WIDEST
Answer: How trombone practice left the family - "EAR-TOTED"

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK OFFER AMMAN - SHARJAH											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 27/07/1997											
PRICE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW				SHARES	TRANS.	TRD	PRICE	PRICE		
298.000	214.500	ARAB BANK	13.3	1.38	4	120	34700	291.00	289.00	2.00	-
2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL SEC.	8	0.00	17	6975	14439	2.07	2.07	-	-
1.500	2.760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.5	0.00	4	5800	17359	3.12	3.10	-	-
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.1	7.72	3	1650	3814	2.19	2.19	-	-
2.800	4.400	THE MORGAN BK.	14.5	3.99	1	250	1215	4.67	4.86	0.01	-
2.440	1.440	JOR. NATL. BANK	10.4	0.00	5	1200	3744	2.87	2.93	0.06	-
1.050	7.600	JOR. CULP. BANK	4.6	9.09	14	15209	19411	7.77	7.77	-	-
1.800	3.000	JOR. INV. PIP. BANK	21.3	0.00	18	4342	14315	3.28	3.32	0.03	-
2.460	1.000	SEIT. AL-HAL (BRIJAH)	7	11.16	2	550	627	1.14	1.14	-	-
1.440	0.850	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	0	0.00	4	1352	1283	0.96	0.95	0.01	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 214.03 CHG: -0.49											
2.470	2.150	GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	13.5	7.41	2	294	662	2.30	2.25	0.05	-
2.550	1.590	JOR. FIREWORK INSUR.	6.5	12.50	1	200	350	1.40	1.60	-	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 113.79 CHG: 0.00											
1.820	1.500	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.0	6.06	2	509	839	1.65	1.65	-	-
2.750	2.150	SHIPPING LINES	16.0	4.73	6	15400	42350	2.75	2.75	-	-
1.550	1.520	MATL. PORTFOLIO	6	0.00	6	616	812	1.44	1.43	0.01	-
1.010	0.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.2	6.82	3	1200	1053	0.87	0.88	0.01	-
0.810	0.480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	26.2	0.00	2	1150	587	0.51	0.51	-	-
1.850	1.440	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	16.3	0.00	7	3100	36320	1.18	1.20	0.02	-
3.700	2.850	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	7.7	0.00	2	300	885	2.95	2.95	-	-
1.520	0.930	SARSA EDUCATION	8.0	0.00	3	1030	967	0.94	0.94	-	-
2.510	1.630	SEIT. AL-HAL (BRIJAH)	8.0	6.55	4	850	1559	1.40	1.42	0.02	-
1.030	0.640	UNION LAND DEV.	0	0.00	5	2050	1312	0.66	0.64	0.02	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 108.10 CHG: -0.06											
4.450	3.100	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	26.7	2.78	20	6118	24433	4.00	3.96	0.04	-
4.140	2.710	JOR. PETRO. LINES	11.0	2.13	4	863	3804	4.00	3.95	0.05	-
7.050	4.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.8	3.15	2	1050	6668	6.45	6.35	0.10	-
10.250	9.040	JOR. PETRO. REFINERY	9.4	9.15	17	1403	13610	9.70	9.71	0.01	-
1.470	1.050	MOULDER INDUSTRIES	10.8	0.00	2	5250	6648	1.39	1.25	0.14	-
3.260	1.680	INDUSTRIAL COM. AG.	9	0.00	4	725	1232	1.70	1.70	-	-
4.100	3.640	ARAB PHARM. COMP.	11.0	4.99	18	3852	15418	3.99	4.01	0.02	-
7.250	5.710	JOR. CHEM. IND.	8.2	0.00	2	5300	2464	4.08	4.05	0.03	-
2.930	1.990	GENERAL KILN	9	0.00	6	50000	100000	2.20	2.17	0.03	-
5.650	4.300	DAR ALDINA INV. TRD.	13.0	4.72	3	900	4768	5.30	5.30	-	-
3.850	2.400	HID. RENT. HOTEL	5.8	-10.12	5	2000	246	2.46	2.47	0.01	-
0.960	0.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.5	0.00	2	1200	542	0.46	0.45	0.01	-
1.310	1.000	ARAB PAPER COM. TRD.	31.5	0.00	4	1750	1803	1.03	1.03	-	-
0.770	0.510	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	2	1200	1590	0.54	0.53	0.01	-
1.290	0.810	JOR. CHEM. IND.	19.4	4.19	8	68000	321900	4.73	4.77	0.04	-
4.820	4.510	JOR. CHEM. IND.	17.5	5.11	7	1629	2239	1.35	1.37	0.02	-
2.980	1.530	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	14.0	6.45	2	100	155	1.55	1.55	-	-
1.470	0.530	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	42	26725	17207	0.63	0.64	0.01	-
1.430	0.740	KAMHAR INVEST.	72.9	0.00	1	500	512	0.48	0.47	0.01	-
2.000	1.080	UNIV. MOD. INDUS.	9	0.00	56	84750	98865	1.13	1.16	0.03	-
1.510	1.000	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	13.7	0.00	13	8250	5384	1.03	1.02	0.01	-
1.600	1.300	NATL. WOL. IND.	13.9	4.76	24	54851	80106	1.40	1.47	0.07	-
1.070	0.810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.2	0.00	1	500	415	0.84	0.83	0.01	-
2.090	1.340	EL-ZAY READY WEAR	47.2	0.00	1	250	335	1.36	1.34	0.02	-
1.330	1.080	INTL. TOURS	6.3	0.00	7	8740	10049	1.13	1.13	0.00	-
1.260	0.860	UNION CH. & WEG.	40.0	0.00	3	1050	917	0.88	0.88	-	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 123.44 CHG: -1.01											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 164.77 CHG: -0.66											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 27/07/1997											
0.660	0.410	JOR. TRADE FNC.	11.7	0.00	3	1750	770	0.43	0.44	0.01	-
1.550	1.070	ZARA FOR INVESTMENT	74.8	0.00	3	3000	3283	1.14	1.14	-	-
0.950	0.540	JOR. FIN. INV. CO.	8	0.00	17	16325	9963	0.61	0.61	-	-
0.840	0.480	UNION INV. CO.	0	0.00	3	11000	2090	0.69	0.69	-	-
0.620	0.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	13	17600	7568	0.43	0.43	-	-
0.950	0.720	AL-SHARQ INV. 751	0	0.00	2	5300	2966	0.81	0.81	-	-
0.480	0.200	JOR. INDUS. INVEST	0	0.00	2	4750	1215	0.96	0.96	-	-
0.730	0.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	4	1208	626	0.52	0.52	-	-
0.570	0.380	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	44.9	0.00	1	250	98	0.39	0.39	-	-
0.750	0.400	JOR. INDUS. INVEST	0	0.00	24	27771	13210	0.48	0.48	-	-
0.820	0.710	JORDAN STEEL	32.1	7.04	2	215	215	0.71	0.71	-	-
0.730	0.590	MIDEST PHARM. 752	8	0.00	7	8230	1743	0.59	0.59	-	-
0.670	0.400	RATL. WOL. IND. 851	8	0.00	7	6400	2752	0.58	0.58	-	-
0.600	0.320	INDS. ENG.	9	0.00	7	3450	1190	0.35	0.35	-	-
0.860	0.740	INDS. CHEMIST	19.1	0.00	2	500	365	0.74	0.73	0.01	-
1.510	1.000	NATL. WOL. IND. P. CORP.	7.60	0.00	1	750	405	1.40	1.42	0.02	-
1.000	0.730	NAT. ALUMINUM. 753	9	0.00	10	4260	2130	0.76	0.75	0.01	-
1.020	0.720	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	36.7	0.00	2	20000	15200	0.76	0.76	-	-
0.850	0.590	HTO. EAST COMPLEX	8.4	14.71	28	35900	23948	0.66	0.68	0.02	-
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 164.77 CHG: -0.66											

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Jordan caps most successful participation in Pan-Arab Games

Kingdom adds 2 more medals as Egyptian athletes test positive

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE KINGDOM'S DELEGATION to the 8th Pan-Arab Games returns home Monday capping the best Jordanian participation to date since the event was first held in 1953.

The record-breaking participation was sealed with the soccer team's gold medal 1-0 win over Syria Sunday night (see story on page 1).

Jordan took a total of 39 medals including 10 gold, 8 silver and 21 bronze medals in the two-week-long event as 94 men and 33 women athletes competed in 14 of the 20 events.

The Kingdom's athletes gained more gold medals in Beirut than in the past 7 Pan-Arab Games altogether. Although the Games have been held only seven times since 1953, Jordan participated in all past Pan-Arab Games gaining a total of 49 medals including 7 gold, 16 silver, 26 bronze (see Jordan's record in table).

Jordan's 187-strong delegation also included 27 officials, 20 coaches and 13 referees who left following the end of their respective events. The karate, soccer, taekwondo and wrestling teams in addition to the media and delegation managers were the last to leave following Sunday's closing ceremony.

In line with international rules, drug testing was introduced for the first time since the Arab Games were launched in 1953.

All gold medalists were tested for performance-enhancing drugs, in addition to one other competitor selected in a draw in each event.

Jordan added two gold medals Sunday after six positive drug tests of athletes from various countries disqualified the winners and Jordan's two silver medalists took the gold.

In the taekwondo 58-kilo-

Jordan's record in past Pan-Arab Games (number of competing countries in parenthesis in overall rank)

Year	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Overall rank
1953	-	-	2	6th (8)
1957	3	4	3	6th (10)
1961	-	1	2	7th (10)
1965	-	-	3	10th (15)
1976	2	5	7	6th (11)
1985	1	-	-	12th (21)
1992	1	6	6	9th (19)
1997	10	8	21	5th (19)



gramme category, Egypt's Adel Mohammad was stripped of his gold and Jordan's Raed Naji took the gold and in the 69-kilogramme Greco-Roman wrestling Egypt's Majdi Mahmoud was also stripped of his gold and Jordan's Abdul Hakim Abu Sneh took the gold.

Also testing positive and disqualified were Saudi Arabia's weightlifter Abdullah Seif, Egypt's gold-medal winning volleyball team, Syria's silver-medal winning basketball team was also disqualified when star player Anwar Abdul Hay refused a drug test. Saudi Arabia had won the gold, the UAE hence took silver, Lebanon the bronze.

On the sidelines of the competition, Jordan received approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001. Kuwait was chosen as a substitute in case Jordan withdrew their bid.

Minister of Culture and Youth Qassem Abu-Ein told Jordan Television Sunday that preparations of the 2001 Games would start immediately.

"We will start working on the necessary infrastructure for hosting the Games in Amman," the minister said.

With Iraqi athletes barred from competition because of a boycott threat by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, 3,000 athletes from 19 countries took part in the Beirut Games and only

Somalia and the Comoros were absent making it the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in Syria in 1992.

Twenty events were contested excluding kick-boxing, handball, gymnastics, body-building, hockey, diving and water polo for technical and financial reasons.

Jordan did not participate in cycling, tennis and volleyball, and contested athletics, basketball, karate, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, equestrian, fencing, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling and shooting. Other events at the Games included golf and yachting.

Jordan's results and medals were the best in the history of past Arab Games participations.

The Kingdom's taekwondo team was one of the most impressive earning a total of 13 medals.

In the women's event, Zaha Talhouini and Alisar Matar took golds for Jordan as Nancy Hindi took silver and Fatima Sayyad and Ahlam Bino bronze.

In the men's competition, Hussein Taleh and Raed Naji took gold, Ali Asmar and Mohammad Abul Ruz silver and Shadi Abu Taleh, Daoud Matar, Ibrahim Agel and Mohammad Nawwaf bronze.

The boxing and athletics teams also secured 10 medals altogether.

The boxers won two gold medals by Mohammad Abu Khadijeh and Ayman Al Nadi and three bronze by Kamal Abdul Majid, Khaldoun Abdul Hameed and Basel Hindawi.

In athletics, Nada Kavar won a gold in the discus and a silver medal in the shot put; Fakhreddin Fuad added another gold in the high jump; Ala' Abdul Hadi won a bronze in the triple jump and Amal Matar took another bronze in the women's marathon.

In weightlifting, Ayed Khawaldeh became the first Jordanian to win three bronze medals; Amer Natour took silver and bronze medals in fencing and Mousa Khalaf took a silver for Jordan in judo.

In Greco-Roman wrestling, Abdul Hakim Abu Sneh took the gold medal in the 69-kilogramme category and Ismail Issa Al Sheikh added a silver in freestyle wrestling.

In karate, Na'el Oweimer took a silver medal in the 80-kilogramme category while teammate Amid Masoud took the bronze in the over-80-kilogramme weight.

The women's karate trio of Nawal Bayyari, Azahir Zuhdi and Butheina Mahsiri won three bronze medals.

In table tennis, Iyad Maknay and Abdul Aziz Rida took the bronze in doubles and added another bronze in the team event. In women's basketball,

Jordan finished fourth while the men came in 6th.

In shooting, Khaled Naghaway was eliminated from the top six qualifying positions so were the rest of the Kingdom's swimmers whose results were far from competitive records.

Hana Majaj took the only swimming bronze medal making up for otherwise disappointing results by her teammates.

The equestrian team failed in the Grand Prix event with veteran Hani Bisharat eliminated in the second round. Ra'ed Naser coming in 9th and Sinan Nashashibi finishing 19th.

In the equestrian team event, Jordan finished at a disappointing 7th place among 8 competing teams. Lebanon hosted the Arab World's premier sports event for the first time since the second Arab Games in 1957.

But the Games, designed to emphasise Arab brotherhood, were clouded by Lebanon's refusal to grant the Iraqi team entry visas for fear of provoking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Jordan had finished 9th overall in the last Pan-Arab Games in 1992 with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Rabat 1985 and Damascus 1992.



Silver medal winner in the 100-metre freestyle competition Noha Al-Ghannam (R) and gold medal winner Rania Al-Alwani (L) stand on the podium after receiving their awards at the Pan-Arab Games in the Bekaa Valley of Zahleh (Reuters photo)

Egypt dominates event with 97 gold medals

Alwani takes record 9th gold

BEIRUT (AP) — Egypt won one of the two remaining events of the 8th Pan-Arab Games on Sunday to finish on top with 97 gold medals.

Egyptian athletes won the men's karate team event to clinch the country's final gold on the last day of competition. But it was the Egyptian weightlifters, wrestlers and swimmers who led the country's medal chase, accounting for 65 gold medals during the past 15 days.

Algeria finished second with 42 golds and Morocco was third, winning 19 of the 214 gold medals at stake. Egypt's haul was the highest by any country at the Arab Games since they began in 1953.

Egypt, the Arab world's most populous nation, started late in the medal chase, winning only five titles during the first three days.

Its gold rush began on the fifth day, when it won 24 golds in weightlifting. The swimmers brought home 20 golds, nine of them by Rania Alwani, known in Egypt as the "fish of the Nile."

Alwani, a 20-year-old medical student at the University of Alabama in the United States, won the best athlete award at the Games with her feat, which broke the record of eight golds set by Tunisian swimmer Faten Ghattas at the seventh Arab Games in Damascus, Syria, in 1992.

Of the 19 countries that participated, only two failed to win any medals — Djibouti, which had sent only one athlete, and Mauritania.

The games were not without controversy. Three more athletes have tested positive for drugs at the Arab Games, raising to six the number of competitors who have failed doping tests, officials said Saturday.

The latest athletes testing positive included two gold medalists from Egypt and Algeria whose judo and boxing titles have been suspended until a final ruling, said Osman Saad, chief of the Arab Sports Federation.

The third disqualified sportsman is a Kuwaiti tennis player, Khaled Jamal Al Ghorbali, who tested positive for a steroid. He did not win any medal at the July 12-28 Games.

More names of drug offenders were expected when test results arrive from a Paris laboratory, Saad said.

Rida Kazem, the head of the Games' Medical Committee, said Algerian Nouredine Majhoud tested positive for a steroid, furensenide, and Bassel Ahmad Al Ghorbawi of Egypt tested positive for strychnine.

Although strychnine is a highly poisonous substance, it has been used by athletes in small quantities over the centuries to strengthen muscles despite a ban in international sports.

"The amount (of drugs) found ... cannot be accepted under any conditions," Saad told a news conference. "God willing, we will be able to limit these incidents and fix the blame."

Majhoud won the gold in the 57-kilogramme category boxing and Al Ghorbawi took the gold in 95-kilogramme judo.

Although Pan-Arab Games have been held since 1953, drug testing was started for the first time this year. So far, a Saudi Arabian athlete has been stripped of his gold medal in discus throw for using a stimulant. Two women athletes from Tunisia and Syria also tested positive and were disqualified.

In the men's basketball final, Saudi Arabia defeated Syria 80-61. The United Arab Emirates won the bronze.

NATION	G	S	B
Egypt	97	57	39
Algeria	41	43	47
Morocco	18	13	17
Syria	16	30	34
Jordan	10	8	21
Tunisia	9	11	26
Qatar	9	6	2
Saudi Arabia	7	10	22
Lebanon	6	16	51
Kuwait	1	13	19
Oman	1	1	1
Sudan	0	1	2
Libya	0	1	1
UAE	0	1	1
Yemen	0	1	0
Palestine	0	0	4
Bahrain	0	0	1

mer Faten Ghattas at the seventh Arab Games in Damascus, Syria, in 1992.

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Berger wins German Grand Prix

HOCKENHEIM, Germany (AFP) — Austrian veteran Gerhard Berger drove his Benetton-Renault to an emotional victory in Sunday's German Grand Prix at Hockenheim.

Berger, at 37 the oldest driver in Formula One, overtook Italian Giancarlo Fisichella's Jordan with 11 laps remaining and went on to score his first Formula One victory since his triumph in the same race in 1994 — when he was driving for Ferrari.

World Championship leader Michael Schumacher of Germany was second in a Ferrari, more than 17 seconds in arrears, with Mika Hakkinen of Finland a distant third in a McLaren.

Berger, on pole position for the first time in almost two years, scored his 10th career victory in 203 races after enduring two months of misery.

He was making a comeback after missing the last three races following a painful sinus operation and the death of his father Johann in a light plane crash two weeks ago.

Berger, who will be replaced by Fisichella at Benetton next year, drove a

dominant race as he made up for his disappointment at Hockenheim last year.

Berger led with three laps remaining last year when his engine blew in a cloud of smoke.

His triumph this year, in front of a crowd of over 140,000, was the first Grand Prix win for Benetton in almost two years.

"I felt I had something special at my disposal this weekend, a special power," said Berger.

The Austrian led from the start and built up an impressive early lead. He pitted after 16 laps, conceding the lead to Fisichella in the Jordan-Peugeot but regaining it after Fisichella himself pitted.

When Berger had to pit again with 11 laps remaining he led by 20 seconds — but it was not enough and Fisichella edged narrowly into the lead.

Berger passed Fisichella on the inside almost immediately — and was not headed again.

Fisichella lost his left rear tyre when it shredded with six laps remaining, wrecking his chances of winning. He was ultimately classified

11th.

Berger clocked 1hr 20min 59.046sec over 45 laps of the 6.823km (4.239 miles) Hockenheim circuit, a total of 307.022km (190.755 miles). He averaged 227.477kph.

Schumacher increased his lead in the Drivers' Championship as he seeks his third world title.

Schumacher now has 53 points to the 43 of his closest rival Jacques Villeneuve of Canada, whose Williams-Renault team had a disastrous race.

Villeneuve, winner of the British Grand Prix two weeks ago at Silverstone, never seriously threatened and dropped out after spinning off the track as the race entered its final quarter.

Jarno Trulli of Italy was fourth in a Prost-Mugen-Honda. Ralf Schumacher of Germany fifth in a Jordan-Peugeot and Jean Alesi of France sixth in the second Benetton-Renault.

Ferrari increased its lead over Williams-Renault in the Constructors' Championship to nine points — 71 to 62 — with Benetton-Renault third on 46.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Dewulf to contest final

KITZBUHEL, Austria (AFP) — Belgian Filip Dewulf, a French Open semi-finalist earlier this year, continued his excellent season Saturday when he advanced to the final of the \$535,000 ATP Tour clay court tournament here. Dewulf, seeded 10th, easily beat the 14th seed from Spain, Galo Blanco, 6-3, 6-2 in under an hour. He will face another Spaniard, Julian Alonso, in the final after 20-year-old Alonso, progressing further than ever before in a Tour event, beat 15th-seeded Czech Slava Dosedel 6-3, 6-4. It was a fine performance from Alonso, playing in only his third big tournament.

Shearer injured in friendly

LONDON (R) — England striker Alan Shearer could miss the start of the English Premier League season after injuring an ankle during Newcastle's friendly against Chelsea on Saturday. Shearer went to hospital for a precautionary X-ray after being taken off on a stretcher in the last minute of the match at Everton's Goodison Park.

Bayern win League Cup final

LEVERKUSEN (R) — League champions Bayern-Munich warmed up for the start of the Bundesliga with a convincing 2-0 win over VfB Stuttgart in the final of the new German League Cup tournament on Saturday. Bayern went ahead after 57 minutes with a superb shot by international midfielder Mario Basler from nearly 30 metres. New Brazilian-signing Giovane Elber, who joined from Cup winners Stuttgart for 12.5 million marks (\$6.9 million), scored Bayern's second in the 71st minute.



Hisham Al-Masri of Syria celebrates after winning four gold medals in different swimming events at the Pan-Arab Games in the Bekaa Valley, Zahleh (Reuters photo)

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Ajax captain Danny Blind (R) shields the ball from Nick Barmby (L) of Everton at Goodison Park Liverpool. The two teams are competing in the international pre-season tournament (Reuters photo)

Swain springs 16-1 surprise

ASCOT (R) — Swain, ridden by John Reid, sprang a 16-1 surprise to win the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes on Saturday.

The race featured a clash of international champions Singpiel, Helissio and Pilsudski but Swain, the outsider of four horses running for Sheikh Mohammad, stole the show.

Swain, trained in France last year but now in England under the care of Saeed Bin Suroor, took the running with 300 metres left in the 12 furlong (2.4 km) showpiece.

The colt battled on well to hold off Pilsudski (6-1) ridden by Michael Kinane and Helissio, the 11-10 favourite, partnered by Cash Asmusen.

The result was an interesting contrast to last year's Prix De L'Arc de Triomphe when Helissio trounced Pilsudski with Swain in third place.

Heavy rain during the morning had altered the Ascot going to soft and resulted in a plunge in the betting on Helissio.

The change in the ground favoured Swain, who outlasted the opposition in fine style to underline the horse's top-class

credentials. Jockey Reid, winner of the King George back in 1978, had never sat on Swain before but knew the horse would stay the distance well.

"I wanted it to be a test of stamina," the Northern Irishman said.

Helissio cut out the early running along with Kingfisher Mill, the mount of British champion Pat Eddery, in second and Swain in third ahead of Pilsudski and Singpiel, ridden by Frankie Dettoni.

Helissio led into the straight with Swain by his shoulder just ahead of Pilsudski. In a battle royal to the line, with four champions giving their all, Swain held on by a length with a length and a quarter separating second and third.

Singspiel finish fourth just ahead of Shantou with Kingfisher Mill fading into last of the eight runners.

Swain, now a five-year-old, has twice been placed in the Arc and also finished third in last year's Breeders' Cup turf to Pilsudski.

Godolphin racing manager Simon Crisford said: "We thought there was a

good race in him but maybe the man of war or the turf classic at Belmont (in the U.S. later in the year). We are delighted with his performance today...He's a really serious top-class race horse."

Sheikh Mohammad, who won the Dubai World Cup and the Japan Cup with Singpiel, felt the changed ground was the key to Swain's success.

"It was a long final two furlongs," said the sheikh, previously successful in the King George on Lammtarra in 1995, King's Theatre (1994), Opera House (1993) and Belmont (1990).

Races on the agenda for Swain now include another shot at the Arc and the Breeders' Cup.

Michael Stoute, trainer of Singpiel and runner-up Pilsudski, said of the latter: "You've got to be pleased with a performance like that. He's a real brave horse who tries his best and I am sure he has been beaten by a champion."

Olympians among first qualifiers at U.S. swimming trials

NASHVILLE (R) — The United States will have at least a few familiar faces at the world championships next January in Perth, Australia.

The first swimmers to qualify for the U.S. team Saturday night at the Phillips 66 U.S. National Championships were 1996 Olympians Jenny Thompson, Amy Van Dyken, Kurt Grote, Jeremy Linn, Josh Davis and Brooke Bennett.

The top two finishers in each event qualify for the worlds January 8-18.

The seven-day meet is also serving as selection trials for the Pan Pacific Games in Japan August 10-13 and World University Games August 25-30 in Sicily.

Thompson, 24, qualified in the 100-metre freestyle. Her morning preliminary time of 54.95 seconds was the fastest time swum in the world this year. She won in 54.96.

Van Dyken, 24, the top U.S. gold medal winner at the 1996 Olympics with four, was second in 55.66 and also qualified. Van Dyken said she will skip the Pan Pacific's to concentrate on her training for worlds.

"It will be nice to see what the rest of the world has in January," Van Dyken said. "It will be interesting to see how we stack up."

Grote, an Olympic silver medalist, won the 100-metre breaststroke in 1:01.45. Linn was second and also qualified.

Quance won the 400-metre individual medley in 4:39.67.

Davis, winner of four 1996 Olympic gold medals, won the 200-metre freestyle in 1:49.

Bennett, an Olympic 800 freestyle gold medalist, won the 1,500-metre freestyle in 16:10.93. She was attempting to become only the second woman to swim under 16 minutes. Three-time Olympian Janet Evans was the first.

Hingis out-slugs Davenport, will meet Martinez in final

PALO ALTO, California (R) — Growing fitter every day, 16-year-old Swiss Martina Hingis withstood the crushing groundstrokes of seventh-ranked Lindsay Davenport to earn a 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 victory in the semifinals of the \$450,000 Bank of the West Classic Saturday.

In Sunday's final, Hingis will meet sixth seed Conchita Martinez of Spain, who won a topspin war of attrition with third seed Amanda Coetzer.

The 1.68 metres, 52-kg Hingis stood toe-to-toe with the 1.91 metres, 75-kg American, successfully trading gargantuan cross-court backhands and bludgeoning the bigger woman's second serve.

"I'm a little faster, my movement is better and my strength is improving," said Hingis, who underwent knee surgery in the spring and was out for five weeks. "I'm almost feeling 100 per cent again. I see the court better than I did before."

It was the fifth meeting between the two and like the previous four, the match went three sets. And like the last two occasions,

Hingis stepped it up when it appeared Davenport was about to blow her off the court.

"In my whole career I have been pretty good in three sets," said Hingis, who notched her 22nd straight three-set victory dating back to the 1996 French Open. "When it gets to the third set I kind of expect that the other girl will get kind of tired or something."

The 21-year-old Davenport said that while she never felt in complete control of the match, it was there for the taking.

"The chances were there in the beginning of the third," the fourth-seeded Davenport said. "If you don't take advantage of them, obviously the number one player in the world is going to take advantage of them and move on."

The key game in the match came with the Californian serving at 1-2 in the third set. Up 40-0, Davenport squandered numerous opportunities to put the game away and Hingis seized the day, pasting a backhand return of serve that the American buried

into the net.

"You have to win those games against her," Davenport said. "I had a lot of momentum and let it stop."

Hingis added that she was sure Davenport's roll would eventually end.

"All of a sudden it stopped and I knew what I had to do," Hingis said. "I tried the crosscourt forehand a few times and found out you should never do that against Lindsay. So after that I just made her move."

While Davenport does not believe that Hingis is as dominant a number one as Steffi Graf was, she is impressed with the 1997 Australian and Wimbledon champion's ability to close.

"Martina can turn it up, turns it down and turns it on again," Davenport said. "Whether she relaxes or gets bored I don't know what it is, but she can turn it on again in the third."

"That's one reason she's number one. When things are going bad, you have to have the confidence to turn it around. That's very difficult to do. I wish I could do it."

Martinez sported an 11-1

record against Coetzer entering their semifinal. However, Coetzer beat her foe for the first time at the French open in May.

But here, Martinez was able to push her opponent deep behind the baseline with high topspin groundstrokes.

"I dominated pretty much the whole match," Martinez said. "We both fought a lot in the first set but I pulled it out."

After winning the one-hour first set, Martinez romped over a despondent Coetzer, who unusually lost her composure at the end of the first set, throwing her racket and loudly disputing two line calls.

Coetzer said that playing Martinez drives her mad. "It seemed like I've played the same match against her over and over again," the South African said.

"I lost my perspective on my shot selection as the match went on."

Martinez is 2-0 against Hingis and says she is playing the best she has in a year. "If I play my game and don't let her play hers, I have a pretty good chance," Martinez said.

Courier to face Enqvist in Infiniti final

LOS ANGELES (R) — Sixth seed Jim Courier used his serve to bounce error-prone top seed Goran Ivanisevic 6-3 6-4 Saturday night in the \$303,000 Infiniti Open and earn a spot in the final against second seed Thomas Enqvist.

"I think I turned it up a notch tonight for sure," said Courier, who ran his record to 7-3 with his fifth consecutive straight wins over the Croat.

"I just came out on top of the ball early and I don't think he came out sharp. I got on top quick and never really let go. He never had a break point, never even sniffed my serve all night."

Enqvist swept past Frenchman Guillaume Raoux 6-4 6-1 in the

day's first semifinal.

"You're gonna see a lot of big hitting tomorrow," said Courier, who leads the head-to-head series 4-1. "Thomas hits the crap out of the ball from both sides. We definitely will go at it for sure. It will definitely be a physical baseline match for sure."

Courier sparked from the baseline and surrendered only seven points off 10 service games to gain his second final of the year.

"I was aware I was serving well but you can't afford to sit back and pat yourself on the back because he's capable of ripping four winners in a row and I was only up a break in each set."

Ivanisevic was asked to explain what happened to

his high-powered game. "Nothing happened," said the world's third-ranked player. "He didn't play anything special. He didn't have to. I made too many mistakes and didn't have one break chance."

Ivanisevic said he made it easy for his opponent. He committed 34 unforced errors — 22 more than Courier. "I was forcing pretty much the serve to hit winners. I just wanted to hit ace after ace and never changed. I couldn't put two balls in play from the back. It was not the greatest day at the office."

Enqvist is pleased to gain his second final of the year after being sidelined for two months with a tendon tear of the left foot. But the world's eighth-ranked player will be satisfied with nothing less than a title.

Enqvist rolled over Raoux, who had scored consecutive upsets over Australian Davis Cup players Mark Philippoussis and Patrick Rafter, the third and fifth seeds here.

"Thomas played much better than me today and there's nothing else I can say," said the 80th-ranked Raoux, who fell to 1-3 against Enqvist.

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♦ 8 5
♣ 8 7 5 2

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♥ 5
♦ A Q J 7 6 4
♣ 5 4

EAST
♠ 10 8 7 4
♥ J 7 4
♦ 10 9 2
♣ A J 10 5

SOUTH
♠ K 9 5
♥ A Q 10 8 6
♦ 6 3
♣ A Q 3

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SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
17 20 27 Pass Pass
47 Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠

Do you consider yourself a master of dummy-play technique? Cover up the East and West hands and decide how you would play four hearts after West has overcalled in diamonds and selects a low spade as the opening lead.

Despite the fact that your king of diamonds might be useless, after partner freely raises hearts the

decision to judge your hand worth a jump to four hearts cannot be faulted. All that remains is for you to make it.

The ace of diamonds is surely wrong, and quite likely the king of clubs as well. If West has only a doubleton club, you can draw trumps, cash the ace of clubs, clear the spades ending in dummy, then head a club to the queen. If that loses, West would be endplayed. Unfortunately, that won't work as the cards lie.

Best is to win the spade in hand, draw trumps, then cash dummy's high spades. Now lead a low diamond from dummy toward the king. If the defense is on the ball, East will insert the ten or nine, but you counter by allowing it to hold. East can do no better than shift to the jack of clubs. Rise with the ace and exit with the king of diamonds to West's ace! That endplays West regardless of how many clubs the defender holds or which defender has the king of clubs. East-West can come to no more than two diamond tricks and one club, since West must either take the king of clubs or give you a ruff-shuffle by returning one of the other plain suits. Well done!

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Arab League meets to discuss nuclear treaty

CAIRO (AFP) — A committee grouping 22 experts from the Arab League began meeting here Sunday to forge an accord on eliminating all types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear arms, from the Middle East.

"Arab foreign ministers decided in 1994 to form this committee to finalise a treaty project and to permit all countries in the Middle East, including Israel and Iran, to adhere to it, once a comprehensive peace has been established in the region," Committee President Mahmud Karem told reporters.

Mr. Karem, who is also director of the disarmament department at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, said that during the committee's five previous meetings progress had been made in completing a treaty.

This latest two-day meeting is aimed at developing a verification mechanism to assure that countries are abiding by the treaty to eliminate nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, he said.

"The Arab countries are committed to working to establish a just and global peace in the Middle East, without letting any party impose its concept of security," Mr. Karem said.

Israel, which does not adhere to the international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is considered by foreign weapons experts to have several nuclear bombs.

In response, countries such as Egypt and Syria have refused to ratify the international convention on the elimination of chemical weapons.

Iran and Iraq are also suspected of trying to develop weapons of mass destruction.

AI assails Israeli draft law to renege on compensation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amnesty International (AI) urged members of the Israeli Knesset not to pass a draft law which will absolve the state's responsibility of compensating human rights violations.

In a report sent to the Jordan Times, AI said that the draft law is up for debate in the Knesset today — the Israeli government is trying to push the draft law through parliament before its recess, August 2.

AI said that many of the cases written on by its members involved attacks and killings by the Israeli army of children who were not involved in demonstrations.

The provisions of the draft

law will outlaw a vast majority of compensation claim AI said.

Neither state nor individual security service members are liable for damages according to the draft law which aims at defining most of the Israeli Defence Forces' activities as combatant.

The only exception to the overall refusal to pay compensation will be if a person is convicted of intentionally inflicting injury.

However, hardly any of the families of those who have been unlawfully killed will benefit from the exception because very few Israeli security force members have been found guilty of intentionally inflicting injuries on victims.

The provisions enable courts to make exceptions at their discretion.

Amnesty International's letter stressed that claims for compensation should not be subjected to statutes of limitation — an article in the draft law provides that notices for compensation be submitted within 60 days of the act and filed within a year.

If the draft law is approved by the Knesset, a victim's 'enforceable right' of compensation becomes something to be granted for special humanitarian reasons — in effect, out of charity, Amnesty International said.

Australia presses Israel to pay substantially after games disaster

SYDNEY (AFP) — Israel is being pressed to pay greater compensation following a third Australian death after a bridge collapse at the Maccabiah Games, games officials said Sunday.

The third victim, Elizabeth Sawicki, 47, of Melbourne, died at a hospital in the northern Israeli town of Afula Saturday from complications caused by swallowing polluted water after she plunged into the Yarkon River from the collapsing bridge on July 14.

Australian Maccabiah team leader Tom Goldman said the figure of \$500,000 which he had sought a few days ago was merely an interim payment, but much more will be substantial.

Mr. Goldman told reporters

as he arrived back in Sydney early Sunday.

"The claim that I spoke about the other day was not the total claim for compensation — it was an interim payment that I requested from the Israeli government."

"The families of the bereaved and those seriously injured are in need of financial assistance now and we'll be doing all in our power to make sure that there's some compensation forthcoming."

Sawicki's death followed those of Yety Bennett 50, and father of two Greg small, 37, who both drowned in the river.

Three of the 43 Australian delegation members injured in the disaster were still in hospital.

Israeli hospital workers said Warren Zines, 56, was in critical condition in a Tel Aviv hospital, while Frank Gaensler, 53, and Sasha Eltermann, 15, were in a stable condition.

Mr. Goldman said Israel had faced so much trauma in the past that it had an overly relaxed "she'll be right" attitude to its own self-preservation.

"Israel has a 'she'll be right, mate' attitude toward a lot of things and they're probably not so diligent when looking after themselves," he said.

"Perhaps something like this will draw their attention that it's just not 'she'll be right, mate,' but they have to start looking at the right way of doing things," he said.

Sawicki's death had caused renewed grief among Australian team members and they would receive further counselling before returning to Australia.

Israeli settlers are now more right-wing — poll

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli settlers have become more right-wing in their views and half of them said they would never accept a government decision to relocate them, according to a poll published Sunday.

Two-thirds of Jewish settlers in the West Bank interviewed by Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv reject any government financial compensation in exchange for being moved as part of a peace accord with the Palestinians.

A third of them believe that the peace process with the Palestinians will collapse and that the Israeli army will retake control of the towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that have been granted Palestinian self-rule.

"These responses indicate a sharp shift to the right in attitudes among settlers since the Likud government (of Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) came into office," 13 months ago, said Ephraim Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies at the university.

"The settler public believes that Mr. Netanyahu will protect their interests in peace talks," he said.

"Settlers feel less threatened, and therefore are more defiant in relating to eventualities in the peace process."

The settlers voted overwhelmingly for Mr. Netanyahu, who backs settlement expansion, and 12.5 per cent said they would take up arms against the Israeli army to prevent a forced evacuation, up from eight per cent in a 1995 survey.

About 145,000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank, excluding Arab east Jerusalem, in about 150 settlements.

90-year-old Israeli kills wife for ruining his life

'What are you going to do to me? Send me to prison for?' — killer

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A 90-year-old Holocaust survivor became one of Israel's oldest killers when he murdered his wife for giving away his war reparation money from Germany, police said Sunday.

"She was a witch. For decades she made my life bitter," Koppel Patashnik told police after stabbing his 81-year-old wife Hanna to death Saturday in their Tel Aviv home.

"She asked me to take the money that I receive from Germany and give it to her children. I didn't agree," he said.

He said his temper finally snapped when she kicked him out of bed in the morning. Neighbours heard her screams but took no notice as the couple were always fighting.

Patashnik, who lost his first wife and the rest of his family in a Nazi death camp in Poland, married Hanna Patashnik, another Holocaust survivor, in 1954 after arriving in Israel.

Hanna, a widow, had three children from her previous marriage and accused her new husband of refusing to share his war compensation with her.

Patashnik mocked police when they came to arrest him, saying: "What are you going to do to me? Send me to prison for life?" He has been sent for psychiatric tests.



GREENPEACE DOCUMENTS OUR CHANGING CLIMATE: Photo of Vitus Lake, at the Bering Glacier in Alaska. The glacier has shrunk by 10-12 km in length during the past century, losing 130 sq. km. in area. Campaigners from the Greenpeace vessel MV Arctic Sunrise joined U.S. Geological Survey scientists working on the site and observed thousands of icebergs in the meltwater lake. Vitus Lake, which covers 70 sq. km, was formed at the base of the glacier by the melting ice. The shrinking glacier is an example of a global glacial retreat, which scientists have linked to global warming caused by the burning of fossil fuels (AFP photo)

GIA chief's body displayed on military truck — report

ALGIERS (AFP) — The body of Antar Zouabri, the slain leader of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), was displayed on a truck following last week's successful army offensive on his hideout located in a mountainous region about seven kilometres from the town of Hammam.

It said Zouabri's corpse was propped up on the side of a military truck that was part of a convoy. Several witnesses who saw the convoy last Thursday identified the victim as Zouabri, head of the most radical fundamentalist group in Algeria.

The paper did not say how or where Zouabri was shot

and the state of his body.

The daily El Watan reported Saturday that security officials had confirmed that Zouabri died last Thursday in a dawn raid on his hideout located in a mountainous region about seven kilometres from the town of Hammam.

However, there has been no official confirmation of his death.

The GIA has denied he was killed and said in a statement that he was still fighting with his troops.

His reported killing came amid a major army offensive in which more than 100 Islamist extremists have

been killed in recent days, according to news reports.

But despite the offensive massacres by Islamist extremists in isolated villages in the region south of the capital have continued with 13 people reported killed overnight Friday in a village near Medea.

The daily El Khabar said an armed group stormed a community at Sidi Salem, massacring the inhabitants and kidnapping an elderly man.

Algeria was plunged into violence five years ago after the military cancelled legislative elections that the now-banned Islamic

Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

More than 60,000 people have since died, many in village massacres, assassinations and bomb attacks, while the security forces have been accused of torture and other excesses.

The first secretary of the Socialist Forces Front (SFF), Seddik Debaill, said Saturday that the number of dead had topped 1,000 in the space of "a few weeks".

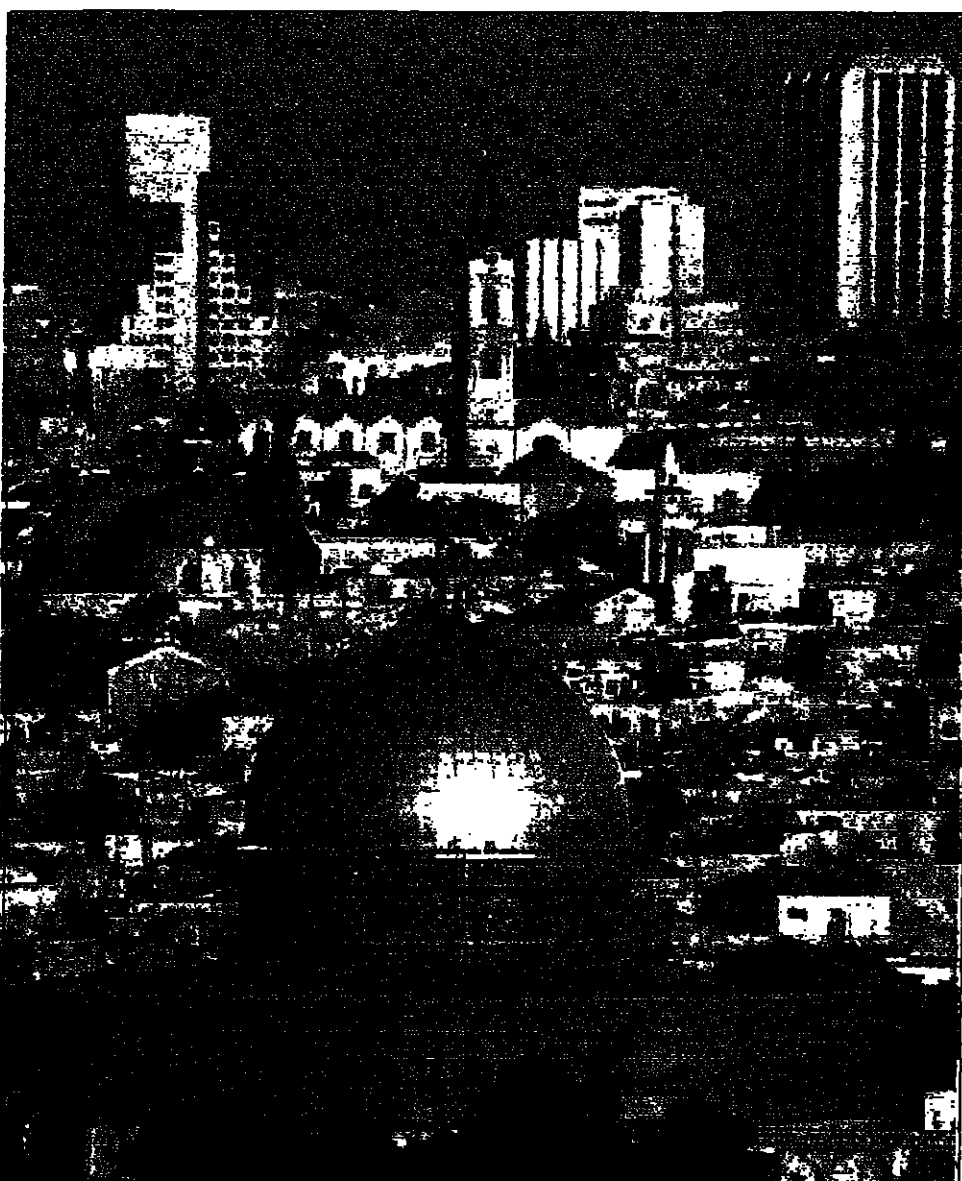
He appealed to President Liamine Zerrouk to intervene to "stop the massacre" of civilians.

Skyscrapers threaten historic Jerusalem skyline

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The rolling hills and white stone buildings of Jerusalem are in the process of "Manhattanisation" as pressure groups and politics push the Holy City towards skyscrapers and highways.

Urban planners and environmentalists have joined forces to try to stop large building projects in the city's western sector which they say will ruin the city's historic character.

The Jerusalem municipality, led by right-wing Mayor Ehud Olmert, lifted regulations barring tall buildings in Jerusalem's downtown three years ago.



Skyscrapers spring up behind Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian holy sites, the Dome of the Rock (centre) and the Holy Sepulchre (left). The Israeli municipality of Jerusalem is pushing ahead with more plans to build skyscrapers but environmentalists and architects say it will damage the historic and religious character of the city and turn it into a new 'Manhattan' (AFP photo)

by imposing a Jewish majority in both sectors.

Geographer Shlomo Hassan noted that for political reasons the municipality has refused to draw up a central urban plan since 1958, a fact which businessmen exploit to build high towers.

"The absence of a plan keeps the city's hands free to expand eastwards. It also suits businessmen who want to build without restrictions," he said.

"The municipality is afraid that the Arab population in the city will pass the thresh-

old of 30 per cent, so it's doing its utmost to build up the Jewish population, particularly richer secular Jews," said urbanologist Meron Cohen.

"But then it runs into pressure from ultra-Orthodox Jews who want more and more housing in Jerusalem," he said.

"The result is they build everywhere," he said.

The ultra-Orthodox, who also generally belong to the poorer sectors of Israeli society, make up less than 10 per cent of the total Israeli popu-

lation, but around 28 per cent of the Jewish population in Jerusalem.

The Society for the Protection of Nature, worried by increasing pollution, has condemned further destruction of wooded valleys, at a time when green areas make up less than five per cent of Jerusalem's area. Some 30 per cent of the eastern sector has been declared as green-belt land, but mainly to prevent Arab construction there. Green areas have been used to build two Jewish settlements in the east.

Heavy drinking 'cure for baldness'

LONDON (AFP) — Heavy drinking may be a cure for baldness, it was reported Sunday. While drunks may lose their friends and their memories, the Sunday Telegraph, quoting hair loss expert Hugh Rushton, said they can be sure of keeping their hair. Unlike bald men, such as Rushton, who tend to have too much testosterone in their blood, heavy drinkers have levels that are so damaged they are no longer capable of processing the hormone properly, said the paper. "If you estimate a man or woman to drink too much alcohol, it is very unlikely he will lose his hair," said Rushton.

Consultant audiologist Malcolm Carruthers told the paper heavy drinkers also tended to be more feminine. "Their large breasts, beer bellies and smoother skins represent an increase in their oestrogen levels," he said.

President gives rave review to 'Air Force One'

LOS ANGELES (R) — Stepping off Air Force One in Los Angeles, President Bill Clinton called a new film named after the U.S. presidential aircraft "Great" but said some aspects of it were more fiction than fact.

"It was a very good movie. I thought it was great," Clinton told reporters, saying he had seen it twice. "You guys should watch it," he added. The adventure movie, starring Harrison Ford as the president, opened at the weekend around the United States. When asked how close the picture reflected reality, Clinton said: "As far as I know, there is no escape pod," referring to an escape capsule described by the filmmakers. He also said members of the secret service "don't quite have the arsenal" depicted.

Over 250 arrested in San Francisco bicycle rally

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — More than 250 people were arrested after a huge San Francisco bicycle rally took an ugly turn, with some riders clashing with police and motorists. "It totally got out of hand," San Francisco police officer, Mary Heffernan said. A route through the city was mapped out for the estimated 6,000 riders who took part in the rally, held on the last Friday of each month to promote bicycles as an alternative to cars. Police planned to escort the riders along the designated route, to keep car traffic away and to let the bicyclists pass through red lights much like a parade. However, thousands of bicyclists veered off the planned route onto busy streets, bringing traffic across San Francisco to a standstill. Police arrested at least 250 of the riders. One officer described the rally as a "madhouse."

French back child curfews — poll

PARIS (R) — French people strongly favour midnight curfews for children imposed by some towns, despite denunciations by the Socialist-led government, an opinion poll showed Saturday. An IFOP poll for the weekly journal Du Dimanche indicated that 81 per cent approved curfews for youths aged 12 or younger from midnight to 6 a.m. If not accompanied by an adult. Just 17 per cent opposed the curfews and two per cent had no opinion. Conservative municipalities in Dreux and Gien, west of Paris, Sorgues in southern France and Aubay in the Paris suburbs have all imposed the controversial curfews this summer as part of an assault on youth crime.

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